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THE  
HISTORY OF WENHAM,

CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL,

FROM ITS SETTLEMENT IN 1639, TO 1860.

BY  
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## P R E F A C E .



THE history of a small country town, and that one no way conspicuous among its neighbors, can hardly be expected to furnish much to interest the general reader. Such a work must be made up of particulars and minute details. It is seldom that great events or distinguished characters occur to give life and interest to the story. The narrative must derive its claim to the reader's attention mainly from his acquaintance with the scenes, or his connections with the actors described.

Yet there is a point of view from which local history may deserve the attention of the thoughtful and philosophic mind. The township is the primary and fundamental institution of our government — the basis upon which the superstructure of state and national organization is erected. The State is but a confederation of towns as the general government is a confederation of States. In either case those powers only are entrusted to the larger body which could not be conveniently exercised by the smaller. In this consist the strength and security of our republic, that so much of the power is retained by the people themselves, and so little delegated to those who represent them at Boston and Washington.

Those little independent municipal corporations are therefore the germ of all our free institutions. Whoever would trace the history of "Liberty in America," must study the history of

towns. From their origin, these were miniature republics, where public affairs were discussed in open meeting, and the result determined strictly by the majority of votes. These town meetings — scenes, as they often were, of earnest contention, and even wrangling — were the schools of republicanism. When the Provincial Government was overthrown, it was several years before a State Government was organized, yet there was nothing of anarchy or confusion; each town went on with its own affairs, and the construction of a state, and afterwards of a national organization, was a work of little difficulty. It was merely the development and application of principles which had existed and been in operation ever since the landing at Plymouth. In this point of view the history and interior structure of a New England township, is the history in miniature of the nation.

The problem of history may be stated thus: given, the present state, condition, and character of a people, to determine those influences in the past which have tended to produce these results. It is the task of the historian to trace the development of these influences, and so to arrange the history of events as to give a miniature of the character and spirit of the age which he describes. He must set before us not only great men — statesmen and scholars — but also ordinary men in their ordinary dress, and engaged in their ordinary employments. He must visit the dwellings of the poor and the abodes of misery as well as the palaces of wealth and luxury. No anecdote, no familiar saying is insignificant which can throw light upon the state of education, morals or religion, or mark the progress of the human mind.

Since the natural features of a country have an important influence upon the character of its inhabitants, they must be described in their primitive wildness as well as in their present state of cultivation and improvement. He must paint the stern and sturdy Puritan, shrewd as the shrewdest in worldly things, yet sacrificing all at the call of duty; trampling on bishops,

lords and kings, but reverencing the majesty of the law and bowing in the dust before his Maker. He must trace the slowly kindling flame of liberty from its first faint sparks till it burst forth in the revolution. He must mark the progress of education and literature, the changes in manners and modes of life. He must deduce, by a process strictly logical, the Yankee of the 19th century, from the Puritan of Plymouth Rock. And with all he should mingle those lessons of instruction and true philosophy which history is designed to teach.

The author is deeply sensible how far he has fallen short of the ideal here proposed. His time has been limited, his materials imperfect, and his abilities [inadequate to the task.

It is much to be regretted that the work was not undertaken fifteen or twenty years ago. Many interesting incidents, especially of revolutionary history, which were recorded only in the memories of aged inhabitants, might then have been preserved, but are now irrecoverably lost.

In preparing this volume, I have made a careful examination of the Town, Church, and Parish Records, the State archives, the histories of adjoining towns, the Historical Collections, and several Histories of Massachusetts, as well as of many manuscript papers. It is possible that some incidents of interest may have been omitted, and that some errors of detail may have crept into the narrative. Those who have had much experience in researches of this character, know the extreme difficulty of avoiding such errors, and will be least disposed to criticise them with severity.

The author would take this opportunity to acknowledge special obligations to Dr. John Porter, Col. Paul Porter, Charles A. Kilham and B. C. Putnam, for valuable materials and generous encouragement. Many others whom he has had occasion to consult, have expressed a kindly interest in the undertaking.

He now with regret takes leave of a work which has occupied so many of his leisure hours in a manner pleasant, and as he fondly trusts, not wholly unprofitable. It has been to him a la-

bor of love, and if it shall have the effect of awakening in the people of Wenham an interest in the antiquities and history of this ancient town, — if it shall excite them to emulate the virtues and avoid the errors of their forefathers, he will feel that he has had his reward.



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# HISTORY OF WENHAM.



## GEOGRAPHY.

THE town of Wenham is situated in the central part of the county of Essex, in north latitude  $42^{\circ} 36''$ , and west longitude  $70^{\circ} 52''$ . At a distance of about 20 miles N. N. E. from Boston, six miles N. from Salem, 16 miles S. of Newburyport, and 18 miles S. E. from Lawrence. It is bounded north by Hamilton, east by Manchester, south by Beverly, and west by Danvers and Topsfield. In length, the town extends about six and one-half miles, while in width it is two and one-fourth miles at the widest point, and at the narrowest but half a mile. Its area amounts to about eight and one-half square miles, or 5400 acres.

The general surface of the town is level, and considerable of it is rather low and swampy. The highest elevation within the limits of the town is Lord's Hill, in the part of it called Egypt. This hill affords a beautiful prospect of the sea and of Salem harbor, as well as of the country for many miles around. Moulton's Hill, a small but gracefully rounded eminence, rises at the head of Cedar

Pond, and affords a delightful though limited view of a highly cultivated country, diversified by the lake, spread out in quiet beauty, as it were beneath the feet of the observer, and contrasting strikingly with the dense, dark green foliage, which over-spreads the vast swamp to the northward. There are several other hills within the town, none of them rising to any great height, but some of which afford prospects rarely exceeded for varied beauty. The eastern part of the town is traversed by the rugged and precipitous range of hills, which skirts almost the entire length of Salem harbor upon the north, and which seems like a rampart raised by nature, as a barrier to the wild fury of the winds and waves.

The fundamental rock of the town is sienite, of the detritus of which its soil is principally composed, though more or less modified by diluvial agency. About 1500 acres of the surface is low and marshy; not far from 400 acres must be allowed for ponds and streams, and perhaps there are six hundred acres more of wild, rough land, fit only for wood and timber. The remainder is most of it susceptible of high and profitable cultivation. It does not, indeed, yield so large a harvest as the stronger and heavier soils of some other parts of the State; but at the same time, it is much easier of cultivation, and, according to the amount of labor bestowed, few lands, at least in New England, produce a more abundant return. It is especially

adapted to the raising of fruit and vegetables for market, both of which are produced in considerable quantities and to good profit. Grass, Indian corn, rye, oats, barley and potatoes are also valuable and profitable crops.

The surface of the town appears to have been originally covered with a heavy growth of pine, hemlock, spruce, larch, cedar, juniper, all the species of oak, maple, hickory, birch, elm and ash. At the present time only such portions as are considered of little value for other purposes, are left to become covered with forests. The "Manchester woods," so called, extend over a considerable portion of the east end of the town; while on the north, the great swamp is left almost entirely in a state of nature. This swamp, which extends into Hamilton and Topsfield, is estimated to cover about 2000 acres. It furnishes valuable stores of firewood, while some of the islands which it contains, are covered with excellent timber. Great fires sometimes rage here in dry seasons, burning below, as well as above the surface of the ground, and causing great destruction before they can be extinguished. Here are accumulated the remains of the decaying vegetation of centuries. Large portions of it contain valuable deposits of peat. The waters of the swamp are drained into the Ipswich river, which flows through the north part of it. With sufficient labor, most of the swamp might doubtless be drained and made valuable and productive

land ; but while western lands are so cheap, and labor continues so dear as it now is, there is no probability that any considerable part of it will be reclaimed.

There are five ponds within the limits of the town. The largest of them is Wenham Pond or Lake, as it is often called. This beautiful sheet of water covers about 320 acres in surface, nearly 100 of which lie in Beverly. It is surrounded on every side by a smooth, gravelly, or sandy margin, and by shores in some places steep, but generally sloping gracefully down to the water's edge. To this and to the fact that no stream flows into it to carry down the wash of the neighboring country, is doubtless owing the unequalled clearness and purity of its waters. So transparent is the ice here formed that it is said that a newspaper has been read through a thickness of two feet of it. Yankee ingenuity and enterprize have turned this apparently useless product of our severe winters into a fruitful source of wealth. The inhabitants of many a torrid region, who have never heard of the name of Massachusetts, and hardly know that there is such a place as New England, are familiar enough with Wenham Lake ice. An American gentleman recently informed me that, while proceeding up the Red Sea in one of the East India Company's steamers, an Englishman, who had travelled much in America, inquired particularly of him, where Wenham Lake was situated, remark-

ing that he had seen most of the lakes in the United States, but never saw Wenham Lake. From the amount of ice which it produced, he supposed it to be one of the large lakes of the Western Continent, and was not a little surprised when informed of its real size.

The shape of this lake is quite irregular, it being at one point, almost divided into two nearly equal parts, by the inward projection of its shores. Its depth is about 50 feet, and its outlet is 34 feet higher than the flow of the tide up the Ipswich river. It was formerly well stocked with fish, but has been of late years so much frequented by sportsmen that the finny tribes have had little opportunity to increase. There has been considerable legislation upon this point, and no doubt if the laws which have already been passed, were properly enforced, the fisheries of Wenham Lake might again become profitable. Alewives formerly came up the river to this pond, to spawn; but the dam upon Ipswich river with other obstructions, has entirely prevented their access. This matter has been a subject of discussion in many town meetings, and committees have been again and again appointed to see that the obstructions were removed and the fish allowed to return to their favorite haunts. For many years an Alewife Committee were chosen every season, as regularly as the Selectmen or School Committee, but latterly the subject has been forgotten or overlooked, and the fisheries of Wenham have proportionally declined.

The banks of this lake, though nowhere wild and precipitous, furnish scenes and views of rare and varied beauty. Several elegant and tasteful residences have been erected upon its borders; and other locations equally, if not even more finely situated, yet remain unoccupied.

On the northern side of this pond, there was formerly a little conical hill called Peter's Pulpit, from the circumstance that Hugh Peters preached from it more than 200 years ago, the first discourse ever delivered within the limits of Wenham. The town once offered this hill to the first church in Salem, on condition that they should erect upon it a monument to their former pastor, the eminent but eccentric Peters; but as the offer was not accepted within the specified time, the town's interest in the spot was transferred to the Ice Company, which proceeded to remove the hill and put up their ice-houses on the place which it formerly occupied. Every one, we are sure, must regret that this interesting relic of antiquity should have been thus entirely obliterated.

Connected with the lake on the west is Cedar Pond, containing about 20 acres. It is so perfectly enveloped by a dense forest, as to be scarcely visible till one stands upon the water's edge. Many years since some gentlemen from Salem formed the project of digging a canal to convey its waters to the lake and build upon it a large factory. Accordingly the trench was dug, and the water drawn



off till nearly the whole of the bottom of the pond was laid bare. Snakes, eels, fish and turtles were found in great abundance, but the spring which was to furnish a constant supply of water power was wanting, and the project of a great manufactory to be carried by it, was at an end.

Muddy Pond, which is about the same size as the last, lies entirely within the great swamp. It is surrounded by low, marshy ground, and inhabited by turtles, eels, water-snakes and other animals which delight in low, miry localities. In consequence of its retired situation and the boggy nature of the ground around it, is seldom visited except by some stray hunter, or adventurous explorer of the swamp.

Pleasant Pond is a beautiful sheet of water, covering about 30 acres, and so hemmed in by surrounding hills and forests as to be entirely concealed from the visitor, until he comes suddenly upon its banks. A little eminence upon its eastern border, presents one of the finest prospects in the town. On the one side the eye rests upon the smooth surface of the peaceful lake, embowered in the dense foliage of the surrounding forests of ever-green; and beyond this, upon the thick verdure of the swamp, while still farther the view is limited by the fertile hills of Topsfield and Middleton; on the south may be seen the church spires of Salem; and nearer, the steeples, mansions and green fields of Beverly; and beneath them, the blue wa-

ters of the lake, shining like a line of silvery light ; while to the east, lies the village of Wenham, with its gardens and cultivated fields, and further north the farms and pasture lands of Hamilton, till the view is terminated by the hills of Ipswich.

This beautiful spot, once so delightful and charming a resort, has lately become connected with associations of a melancholy character. As several young men were here amusing themselves in skating, Dec. 19, 1856, one of them, Mr. Joseph P. Cook broke through the ice, and before help could reach him was drowned. He was a youth much loved and lamented by a large circle of relatives and friends, and the memory of his sad fate will long cast its shadow of sadness over the spot of his untimely death.

Coy's Pond is a long and narrow sheet of water, in the easterly part of the town, containing perhaps 30 acres of surface. Its name is supposed to be derived from that of a family well known in the early history of the place, and which formerly lived near its shores. This pond is connected with a series of lakes which have their outlet to the sea near the village of Essex.

The principal stream within the town, which has been dignified by the name of Miles' river, takes its rise from a swamp in the north part of Beverly. It flows first into the eastern part of Wenham, then taking a turn to the west, it passes through the Neck, till it strikes the Beverly line. Here it re-

ceives a branch from the east, and, afterwards, the stream which forms the outlet of Wenham Lake. Turning again to the north, it flows through the town of Wenham, a little to the east of the village, and pursuing its course through Hamilton, empties at length into the Ipswich river. It is a sluggish stream, falling but a few feet in its entire course of 4 or 5 miles, through the town. Of course, it offers no great water privileges, although in former times, two places at which there is a fall of a few feet, were improved to turn the machinery of a saw and grist mill. But though the river affords very little water power, it is useful in fertilizing the broad meadows which skirt its banks, while its quiet pools, the favorite haunts of the finny tribes, furnish an abundant source of amusement to the disciples of Izaak Walton.

Nature has not given us as a town any remarkable advantages of situation. Our streams are too small to be of much use for manufacturing purposes. Our inland position debars us from the sea. We have no stores of mineral wealth to be dug from the bowels of the earth, but industry, energy and economy are admirable substitutes for these gifts of nature, and may more than compensate for her deficiencies. Without anything especially grand or romantic in the way of scenery, Wenham possesses many of the elements of a charming country residence. It has a fertile soil and a healthful situation; the village and the coun-

try around it are alike remarkable for quiet, rural beauty. The houses and farms present a general appearance of neatness and comfort. In every direction are good roads and pleasant drives, while our gracefully rounded hills and crystal lakes present scenery of a beauty and loveliness rarely equalled. We will only add the testimony of John Dunstan, Esq., an English gentleman who visited the town in 1686. "When we came," says he, "to Wenham, which is an inland town well stored with men and cattle, we paid a visit to Mr. Gerrish, the present minister of that place. Wenham is a delicious paradise ; it abounds with all rural pleasures, and I would choose it above all other towns in America to dwell in. The lofty trees on each side of it are a sufficient shelter from the winds, and the warm sun so kindly ripens both the fruits and flowers, as if the spring, the summer and the autumn had agreed together to thrust winter out of doors."

## CIVIL HISTORY.

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THE first permanent settlement in Essex County, was made at Salem, under John Endicott, in 1628. In consequence of the religious persecutions in England, emigration was quite active for several years subsequent. As their purpose in coming was to become cultivators of the soil, the colonists, as they arrived, scattered themselves over the country, usually settling first upon the banks of streams and ponds where the situation appeared to be most agreeable and the soil most easily cultivated. Salem, as first laid out, included within its limits, Beverly, Manchester, Marblehead, Danvers, part of Lynn, Topsfield and Wenham, the last of which was the first to be set off as a distinct township. The territory embraced within the town appears to have belonged to the Agawams, a tribe of Indians settled upon the Ipswich river, of whom the land was purchased for the nominal sum of £4 16s.

The first notice we have of the place is an account of the "murder of John Hoddy, near the Great Pond." John Williams, the murderer, was seized, sentenced to be hung, and executed at Bos-

ton. This murder, the first which occurred among the European population of the colony, excited general attention. Tradition relates that the act was committed near the boundary line, on the main road to Beverly. Williams appears to have supposed that his victim had with him a large sum of money, but he actually found nothing. It is said that the murderer was seized by Hoddy's dog and held till people collected and apprehended him.

The earliest settlements in the place are supposed to have been in the vicinity of the lake. Nov. 5, 1639, the Legislature passed an act, that "Whereas the inhabitants of Salem have agreed to plant a village near the ryver which runneth to Ipswich, it ordered that all the land near their bounds, between Salem and said river, not belonging to any other town or person, by any former grant, shall belong to said village."

Wenham Lake is said to have been a favorite resort of the Indians for fishing, but by what name they called it, or the territory around it, is not now known. The first settlers called their village Enon, and hence it was probably, that Hugh Peters preached the first sermon within the town from John iii. 23, "In Enon near to Salem, because there was much water there." When, however, the town was incorporated in 1643, it assumed its present name, as appears by the following record:

"The General Court of Elections, held at Boston, ye 10th day of ye third month, Anno 1643. It or-

dered that Enon shall be called Wenham. Wenham is granted to be a town and hath liberty to send a deputy."

A true copy, as appears of record examined.

ISAAC ADDINGTON, *Secretary*.

As the year then commenced with March, which was reckoned the first month, the date of the incorporation of the town would fall upon the 10th of May, upon which day its centennial anniversary has twice been celebrated. The present name of the town is supposed to have been derived from a town of Suffolk County, in England, lying near Ipswich, and consisting of two parishes, called Great Wenham and Little Wenham, respectively. From this place, some of the early settlers are supposed to have emigrated. The name has at least one advantage that it is not likely to be confounded with other towns having the same designation, in other States. We believe there is but one Wenham within the bounds of the Union.

The earliest of the town records extant, is a grant of twenty acres of land to the town, one-half of it by Mr. Smith, on one side of the meeting-house, and the other half by Mr. John Fisk, on the other side of it. This grant, which was made March 2, 1642, appears to have been divided into two acre lots, which were given to actual settlers on condition of building upon them dwellings for themselves and their families. But in case that any



such should wish to remove from the village, they were required to offer their places for sale first to "the Plantation." The object of this arrangement was to encourage actual settlers, and also to form a village about the middle of the town. From these votes, it appears that a meeting-house, at least a temporary one, had already been built. It is supposed to have stood on or near the spot occupied by that built in 1664, viz., upon the eminence near the house now belonging to Mr. Henry Tarr.

In Nov., 1643, it was voted that no inhabitant should introduce any one into the town without the consent of the Selectmen, under the penalty of a fine of five shillings for every week that such person should remain within the limits of the town. This rule appears to have continued in force for a long period, as we find from time to time that several persons, who had not been properly approved, "were warned to remove to the place from whence they came."

These votes throw some light upon the internal constitution of the new plantation. When a new settlement was formed, a grant was usually made by the General Court, of the lands within the limits of the town, to certain individuals, and these persons then proceeded to divide a part of the land among themselves, as they could agree, and the remainder, which continued undivided, was owned in common. Among the early proceedings of the town, are frequent grants of lands to individuals settling upon



them. But as the corporation became responsible for all persons who gained a settlement within its limits, they were exceedingly cautious whom they admitted to live among them. Thus, when any property was sold, the town was to have the first offer of it. The original corporators alone, appear to have had the right to vote or to hold office. As others removed into the place, the right of citizenship and a share in the common lands was granted by a vote of the town to such as they saw fit.

For many years every person who wished to become a freeman was required to be a member in good standing, of some Congregational church. None but freemen were allowed to hold office or vote on public affairs. This regulation continued in force until 1664, when it was so far modified by a royal order, as to allow all persons to become freemen, who could obtain from some clergyman acquainted with them, certificates of being sound in doctrine and correct in conduct. The freeman's oath might be taken before the General Court, or the quarterly courts of the counties. The form, as described May 14, 1634, was as follows:

“I, A. B., being by God's providence, an inhabitant and freeman within the jurisdiction of this Commonwealth, do freely acknowledge myself to be subject to the government thereof, and therefore do swear by the great and dreadful name of the everlasting God, that I will be true and faithful to the same, and will accordingly yield assistance

and support thereunto, with my person and estate, as in equity I am bound; and I will also endeavor to maintain and preserve all the liberties and privileges thereof, submitting myself to the wholesome laws and orders made and established by the same. And farther, that I will not plot nor practise any evil against it, nor consent to any that shall so do, but will truly discover and reveal the same to lawful authority now here established, for the speedy preventing thereof. Moreover, I do solemnly bind myself in the sight of God, that when I shall be called to give my voice touching any such matter, of this State wherein freemen are to deal, I will give my vote and suffrage, as I shall judge in my own conscience may best conduce to the public weal of the body, without respect of persons or favor of any man; so help me God in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Those who were not church members, were required to take the resident's oath, which resembled the preceding, except that it omitted the last clause.

Some of the earliest settlers of the town were Phineas Fisk, William Fisk, John Fisk, Richard Dodge, Charles Gott, Austin Kilham, Richard Goldsmith, Thomas White, John Abby, Robert Harris, Joseph Batchelder, Esdras Reade, James Moulton, John Fairfield, Richard Huston, Robert Cowen, Richard Kimball, Edward Waldron, and Christopher Young.

Phineas Fisk was the first constable, and he, with Charles Gott and John Fisk constituted the first board of selectmen; Wm. Fisk was town clerk, Esdras Reade grand-jury-man, and Joseph Batchelder, who served in 1744, was the first representative to the Legislature. 6/

Distinctions among the different grades of society were for a long time carefully observed. The title of Mr. was given to professional men, merchants, captains of vessels, or in the militia, and to those who had been made freemen, while their wives and daughters were called Mrs. To be deprived of this title was a degradation sometimes inflicted by the Courts. Thus, in 1631, Josias Plais-tow was sentenced for a misdemeanor, "hereafter to be called by the name of Josias, and not Mr. as formerly used to be." Persons not entitled to the distinction of Mr. were called good-man and good-wife.

For many years, all the freemen of the colony used to meet at Boston, for the election of the Governor and other magistrates. The inconveniences of this practice were seriously felt, but it was continued until 1663, when the law requiring it was repealed. The repeal, however, was so unpopular, that the practice was renewed the next year; it seems to have gradually ceased, on account of the increasing size of the Province and the dangers apprehended from the Indians.

In 1643, Wm. Fisk received liberty from the

General Court to keep an ordinary, (public house), and in 1646, was licensed "to sell wine and strong water;" which privileges were, a few years later, transferred to Phineas Fisk. As early as 1644, a highway was laid out by the State, through Wenham, from Salem to Ipswich. In the same year it was voted, "that those who have any lott in ye Neck, have libertie from the town to inclose in a common field, with a straight fence from ye right hand of ye bridge unto ye river, by Richard Dodge's, \* \* \* provided a common highway be left out." Thus early had that part of the town been settled and acquired the name which it still retains.

Surrounded as the colonists were by a HOWLING wilderness, one of their cares was to secure themselves against beasts of prey. Accordingly, in 1644, a bounty of twenty shillings was offered to every man who should kill a wolf. Nor less precautions were they obliged to use against the savages. For selling a gun to an Indian, Robert Gowen was, in 1650, fined £10, half of which, however, was remitted, upon his humble petition to the General Court.

The comparative wealth of the infant town may be estimated from the amount of its tax, which, in 1645, was £3 10s, the entire tax of the colony being, for that year, £616 14s. 6d. Much of the early business of the town had reference to the "common lands." No person was allowed to cut

a tree from them without the consent of the town, and we find special permits given to individuals, to cut wood and timber for themselves. Cattle were forbidden to trespass on any "common lands" where corn was growing; but swine early received the freedom of the town, though accompanied by some restrictions, as appears by the following order of the selectmen, in 1655, viz.:—"All swine shall be yoked, that is to say, all swine above a quarter of a year old to be yoked with yokes standing five inches above their necks; and if they be a year old, to be nine inches long on each side; and all swine under a quarter of a year old, shall either be yoked, or else the owner to pay the damage they do." The penalty for breaking this rule was a fine of seven shillings to the town. Stringent rules were also passed respecting fences, which were to be built of a certain height and kept in repair, under heavy penalties.

These details may appear tedious and trivial, yet they are important, as showing the spirit of the early settlers. Any one who has ever lived in a settlement of the Irish or Germans, such as are often found in the Middle and Western States, will at once appreciate the importance of these regulations. We may see in them the germ of all that distinguishes a neat and tasteful New England village from the assemblage of wretched hovels so often found in the Middle and Southern States.

In 1656, Rev. Mr. Fisk the pastor of the little

village, with a majority of the church, and probably of the people, removed, to form a new settlement at Chelmsford.\* By this emigration, the town was of course much weakened, and we find them afterwards sending a representative to the General Court only once in two or three years, whereas they had previously sent one annually. Several names, which had been prominent among the first settlers, now disappear from the history of the town. Those who were left, however, acted with becoming spirit and energy. They proceeded at once to procure a new pastor, Rev. Antipas Newman, and even offered him £5 more than they had given to Mr. Fisk.

In order to show who were the actual inhabitants at this period, and also to show their comparative means, we subjoin a copy of the rate imposed in 1659, for Mr. Newman's salary. "An engagement to the Rev. Mr. Newman for his support, for the year 1659.

\* As it may be interesting to some of our people to know something of the colony which went out from Wenham, I insert the following extract from the History of Chelmsford, by Rev. Wilkes Allen :— "They (the people of Chelmsford) had, before this, obtained a valuable accession to their numbers and wealth, in the Rev. John Fisk and a part of his church, who were induced to remove from Wenham to this new settlement. In this company of holy pilgrims, for they were all holy by profession, the town received an ascension gift and a church already formed and consecrated." The first planters, it is said, were greatly assisted by the wealth which the Wenham company brought with them. Among these pious emigrants, was Dea. Cornelius Waldo, a man of distinguished usefulness. Thomas, afterwards Major Henchman, another of the Wenham company, was for many years, a leading character, and became a large landholder. Dea. Andrew Spalding also, is said by tradition, to have belonged to the Wenham company. Esdras Reade, who had represented Wenham, in the Legislature, in 1648 and 1651, was the first magistrate chosen after the incorporation of Chelmsford.

	£	s	
Phineas Fisk,.....	2	10	
Mr. Gott,.....	3	00	in corn
✓ Austin Kilham,.....	2	00	in corn
Henry Kimball,.....	1	00	half in corn
Richard Kimball, .....	3	15	
Richard Hutton,.....	2	00	
Robert Gowen,.....	1	00	
James Moulton, Sr.,.....	3	00	
John Dodge,.....	2	15	one third in corn ✓
John Fisk,.....	3	00	
Daniel Kilham,.....	1	10	
John Gooland,.....	2	00	
John Powling,.....	1	15	in corn
John Abby,.....	1	15	in corn
Mark Batchelder,.....	1	15	
Richard Goldsmith,.....	1	15	
James Moulton, Jr.,.....	1	00	
Alexander Moxey,.....	1	12	
William Gore,.....	1	15	
Edward Waldron,.....	1	00	
Henry Haggett,.....	1	15	
John Kilham,.....	1	15	
John Batchelder,.....	1	00	
Abner Ordway,.....	1	00	
Thomas White,.....	1	00	
Richard Coy,.....	2	10	
Thomas Fisk,.....	2	15	
<hr/>			
Total,.....	£46	12s	

In 1663, a new meeting-house was built, the expense of which was defrayed partly by subscription, and partly by a tax of £80 3s. 8*d*. The seating of this house was ordinarily left to the selectmen, but it was also a frequent subject of debate in the town meetings. In 1665, Mr. Newman's salary was raised to £50, and two pounds of butter for every milch cow in town, "this sum to be paid promptly; if left till the 1st of February, the constable to demand it, and, if need be, to distrain for it."

Josselyn, in his account of his second voyage to New England, in 1663, says, "Wenham is an inland town, very well watered, lying between Salem and



Ipswich; consisteth most of men of judgment in re rustica [agriculture] and well stored with cattle."

For several years subsequently we find no event of particular interest recorded. The care of the fences, the commons, and the highways, the annual elections of town officers, and occasional disputes with the neighboring towns respecting boundaries, constitute the staple of the early records. These we might give at great length, but it would be merely tedious, and would, after all, give but a very imperfect idea of the real history of the place. From facts like these, we may learn that they were careful farmers and conscientious citizens. The degree of attention paid to the subjects above mentioned, furnish no imperfect test of the progress of general thrift and improvement. But much that we would like to know, is entirely unrecorded. The alarms and dangers of Indian warfare; the agitations of religious controversy and excitement; the drafts of men which were often made upon the New England towns, for the Indian and French wars; these and many other matters of interest are unnoticed in the records, and must be learned, if learned at all, from other sources. Much that would be most valuable and interesting in the history of the town, must forever remain unwritten. The inhabitants having become careless about attending the meetings of the town for business, a vote was passed, Feb. 6, 1672, "that whosoever shall not come and attend the town meeting, being warned



thereto, viz., at the general town meeting on the first Monday in January, by nine o'clock, and at the other meetings that shall from time to time be appointed, shall forfeit 2s 6*d* for the general meeting, and 1s 5*d*, and such defects to be entered upon record and gathered by the constable."

This may remind one of the old Greek Republics, which used to impose a fine upon every citizen who did not attend and vote at public meetings, since they held that the State was entitled to the counsels and votes of its children, as well as their active services in time of war.

"Sab., May 18, 1673, Richard Goldsmith was killed by lightning at the house of Rev. Mr. Newman, (lately deceased) while Rev. Mr. Higginson of Salem, was present. Mr. H. had but just returned from meeting, where he had supplied the pulpit. While he was sitting, engaged in conversation, the lightning passed through the room, killing Mr. Goldsmith and a dog lying under his chair."

In 1675, King Phillip's War broke out, and continued for two years. It was the principal struggle made by the Indians, for their homes and hunting grounds. They fought with the energy of despair, and inflicted many a severe loss upon the "pale-faced intruders." About six hundred of the whites were killed, and many more were severely wounded. Thirteen towns and six hundred houses were destroyed; and the expenses of the war have been

estimated at half a million dollars; an enormous sum, considering the scarcity of money and the small number of those upon whom the burden fell. But heavy as were the losses of the feeble colonists, those of the enemy were still greater. They were routed from all their old fastnesses, and their power effectually broken. Their subsequent struggles were less for victory than for revenge.

We know not as our little town was ever the scene of any struggle with the Indians. Surrounded as it was by other and more exposed settlements, upon which the fury of the enemy mainly fell, its inhabitants probably escaped any direct attack. But while they had to do with an enemy so wily, so active, and so insidious, no settlement however protected, could feel itself secure. The swamps and forests which still remained, might shelter the restless and lurking foe, and the inhabitants might be shot down from hedges and thickets while about their work, as they came from their houses or travelled along the way. No place was safe and at no time were they free from danger. The law of 1676, that each town should "scout and ward" and clear up the brush along the ways "to prevent the skulking of the enemy," was doubtless obeyed. Farmers carried their arms and ammunition as well as implements of husbandry to their fields, and sentinels paced their rounds about the church while the people were met for public worship. A fortification was raised

in every town to provide against an attack, and even private dwellings were so constructed that they might be used for defence.

Early in the war, the governments of the different colonies, feeling the necessity of decisive measures, determined to unite their forces and to make a bold attack upon the stronghold of the enemy. In the depth of winter, a force of five hundred and fifty men was collected in Massachusetts, and, being joined by reinforcements from the Plymouth and Connecticut colonies, they made a forced march through the snows and over the frozen ground, till they reached, Dec. 19, 1675, a swamp in the country of the Narragansetts, where the Indians had built a fort and gathered their bravest warriors. Notwithstanding that they had camped out the previous night, "with no other covering than a cold and moist fleece of snow," and had marched nineteen miles that day, wading through the drifts, the troops rushed at once to the attack. The Indians retreated to the middle of the swamp, where they had fortified an island, covering five or six acres, with palisades and a hedge nearly a rod thick. "There were two entrances, one over a long tree upon a place of water, the other at a corner," and commanded by a log-house in front, and on the left by "a flanker." At this point an attack was made by the Massachusetts troops, led on by Capt. Johnson, who unfortunately fell at the first fire, and so many of the soldiers were killed or wounded

that they were obliged to retreat. Again however, they were rallied by their valiant leaders; again they rushed to the charge, carrying block house and flanker, and fairly establishing themselves upon the island. The Indians then retreated to the middle of the fort, and the whole mass was quickly engaged in desperate and deadly strife. The struggle was long and bloody, for the savages outnumbered their assailants more than three to one, but "manifest destiny" was against them. They were routed, their wigwams were burned, and their corn and other stores destroyed by the flames. Three hundred warriors are supposed to have been slain, while as many more were taken prisoners. But this success was not purchased without severe loss. More than a hundred of the Massachusetts troops were killed or wounded. Five of the inhabitants of Wenham were drafted for this expedition, viz., Mark Batchelder, Richard Hutton, Thomas Kimball, Samuel Moulton, and Phillip Welsh, the first of whom was killed in that fearful assault upon the fort of the Narragansetts. He was one of the oldest and most respectable citizens of Wenham.

The power of the Indians was broken in this battle, but the war still continued in a desultory manner for two years. In these contests the people of Wenham bore their part in contributions of men as well as of money. The manner in which the State used to pay the services of its old and faithful soldiers, may be seen from the following

order of the General Court, March 18, 1684. "In answer to the petition of John Fisk, of Wenham, a sore wounded soldier in the late Indian war, and thereby incapacitated to get his living, humbly desiring the favor of this honored General Court, (having the approbation of the selectmen of said Wenham) to grant him a license to keep a public house of entertainment, therewith freedom from county rates, and also to sell drink, free from imposts and excises." Consent was given.

These trials and struggles bore heavily upon the interests and prosperity of the town. In 1675, the State tax of Wenham was £5, the entire sum levied upon the colony, being £1,553 5s. 4d. It will be noticed that the proportion assessed upon the town was considerably less than it was twenty years earlier. The same year all the towns were required by the Legislature to raise a subscription for the benefit of Harvard College, to enable that institution to erect a new hall. Some of the towns were backward in contributing their part, and stringent orders were passed to enforce payment. "In answer to the petition of Thomas Fisk and Chas. Gott, in behalf of Wenham," the Court, however, granted that the town of Wenham be discharged from that subscription as to the college, for the reasons therein expressed. What these reasons were, we are not informed, but they doubtless had reference to the feeble and drooping condition of the place.

About this time an event occurred which caused great annoyance to the inhabitants of Essex County. This was the claim advanced by the heirs of John Mason, to all the lands lying between Salem and the Merrimack river, according to a Patent granted several years before the Massachusetts charter, to Sir Ferdinand Gorges and Capt. Mason. Several attempts were made by these persons, to establish colonies upon the territories which they had received, but without success. The same lands were subsequently included in the grants made to the Massachusetts colony, by whom they were occupied, and had, for more than fifty years, been held undisturbed. But as the lands had now become quite valuable, the old and long dormant claim was again revived. As this claim involved every man's title to his own farm and dwelling, it is not strange that great excitement was created by it. A convention was held in Ipswich, to consider the subject. A petition to the king was drawn up, setting forth that the inhabitants had purchased their lands from the Massachusetts Company, and also of the Indians, and that they had been for more than fifty years, in uninterrupted and undisputed possession; and praying his majesty's favor that the claim might be fairly tried in a legal way. This petition was signed by Thomas Fisk, Walter Fairfield and Thomas Patch, in behalf of the people of Wenham, and it was accompanied by another to the same effect, signed by Simon Bradstreet, then Governor, in behalf of the colony.



The claim continued to be agitated till 1691, when the heirs of Mason sold their interest to Samuel Allen, a London merchant. This man commenced a suit for ejection, against one of the largest landholders of New Hampshire, which was also included in his patent. Failing in this, he petitioned to be put in possession of all waste and unoccupied lands within the limits claimed, which was granted; but all proceedings were broken off by his sudden death. His son prosecuted the claim, but without success. After his death one of the heirs of Mason obtained a recovery of entail, on the ground that the previous sale, from some informality, was invalid. By him, the claim was sold to several gentlemen who, to put an end to further litigation, voluntarily relinquished all right and title within the towns, which had been already settled. Thus a controversy which had continued for more than one hundred years, was at length settled, and the inhabitants between Salem and the Merrimack river confirmed in all their possessions.

In all new countries the settlement of the boundaries between neighboring communities has been a frequent source of difficulty and contention. The town was at first laid out without much regard to regularity of form, and no permanent or substantial bounds were erected. The selectmen in their "perambulations," were content to mark the important points by heaps of stones, nails driven into trees, or sometimes merely by describing a

stump, or an old pine or oak tree. No small portion of the early records is made up of accounts of these "perambulations." About this time there was a warm dispute respecting the boundary lines between Wenham on the one side, and Salem and Beverly on the other. Town meetings were held, committees were appointed, prosecutions were begun in the courts, and finally the matter was carried before the Legislature. A committee was appointed to examine the matter, who made a report favorable to the claims of Wenham. The Legislature confirmed their decision, and gave sentence that Beverly and Salem should each pay £5 and costs. After this, the selectmen on each side "did meet and perambulate the bounds." The result of their labors is given at great length and in a chirography more than usually distinct.

Disputes also arose respecting the bounds on the side of Manchester and Ipswich, but these were settled with less difficulty. The Topsfield line led the perambulators through bogs and swamps, where they used to get sadly bemired. It was difficult, on account of the nature of the ground, to erect any permanent landmarks. To obviate this difficulty, the line was several times shifted, but always by amicable arrangement. In all these contests, Wenham exhibited no lack of spirit, and if the question at stake had been between rival kingdoms instead of neighboring and friendly towns, it could hardly have been more zealously or more obstinately contested.



The Revolution of 1688, which had so important an influence upon the history of England, extended its effects to this remote hamlet. The Charter of the Massachusetts colony, which the people had always regarded as the palladium of their liberties, was set aside in 1684, by a process of *quo warranto*, in the royal courts in England. The people were thus left at the mercy of the king. They could hope for nothing from the Stuarts, a race of sovereigns who had always hated the principles and practices of the Puritans. The General Court for 1686 was abruptly dissolved, and its place supplied by a Governor and Council appointed by the king.

To this body, powers of the most arbitrary and despotic character were granted. They were authorized to enact laws, subject only to approval by the king; to levy taxes, to control the forts and militia, to regulate the currency, to erect courts and appoint judges, and, in case of resistance, to execute martial law. Soon after this, Sir Edmund Andros was sent over as "Captain-General and Governor-in-chief" of all New England, and with him a sufficient body of troops, as it was supposed, to subdue and keep down the refractory colonies. One of his first acts was to impose a tax of "twenty pence on each poll, and one penny on the pound upon all the late Colonies and Provinces." This tax having never been granted by the representatives of the people, was manifestly illegal,

but all who refused to pay it were seized and imprisoned, refused the benefit of a *habeas corpus*, and finally condemned by a packed jury, "most of them non-freeholders, and some of them strangers and foreigners." The press was restrained, and a design formed of establishing the Episcopal Church, and compelling all other sects to contribute to its support. The old land titles were declared to be void, and it was threatened that writs of intrusion should be issued, "as many as a cart could hold." "Our condition," said Danforth, "is little inferior to downright slavery." To assemble peaceably in town meeting for purposes of deliberation, was declared to be an act of sedition and riot.

The prospect at this time was gloomy in the extreme. But it was not in the nature of the Puritans to despair. In the hour of peril they put their trust in God, and patiently waited for the favorable moment to strike for deliverance. Fortunately for them, the tyranny of James was not confined to America. His oppressive and arbitrary measures at length provoked a revolution which drove him from his throne, and ended in the proclamation of William and Mary, to be king and queen of England.

The news of the revolution at home soon reached New England, and immediately the people arose in their might, deposed Andros, disarmed his followers, and entrusted the management of affairs to a Committee of Safety, of whom the venerable

Bradstreet, now in his 83th year, was chosen president. The influence of these events was felt even to the remotest hamlets. As the tyranny of Andros and his subordinates had been everywhere felt, the rejoicing at his downfall was equally universal. The following record will show the feelings of the people of Wenham in view of the then state of public affairs, and also the interest they felt in all that affected the well-being of the colonies.

“ May 6, 1689. At a town meeting. We the freeholders and inhabitants of the town of Wenham, being deeply sensible of and thankful to God for his great mercy in delivering us from the tyranny and oppression of those vile men under whose injustice and cruelty we have so long groaned, withal render our hearty thanks to those worthy gentlemen who have been engaged in so good a work as the conserving our peace, since the revolution; yet being also apprehensive of the many inconveniences and hazards of the establishment of our affairs: Resolved, that we expect that our Honorable Governor and deputy Governor, and assistants, elected by the freemen of this colony, in May, 1686, together with the deputies then sent down by the respective towns, to the court then held, and which was never legally dissolved, shall come together and exercise their power as a General Court, according to our charter, on the 9th of this May, inst., and in so doing, we promise and

engage to aid and assist them to the utmost of our power, with our persons and estates, praying God to grant them the management of our arduous affairs, and we hope that all those who are true friends to the peace and prosperity of this land, will readily and heartily join with us herein. Voted, with one consent, in the affirmative."

They then chose Ensign Fairfield and Thomas Patch to inform the Committee of Safety, of "this their mind and determination." A convention of towns was held a few weeks later, to which Walter Fairfield and Thomas Fisk were sent as delegates from Wenham, and which voted by a large majority, for the resumption of the beloved Charter. But this the magistrates were afraid to do without the consent of the English Commons, and that consent was never obtained. A new Charter was formed, in many respects less favorable than the former one, but with which the colonists were compelled to put up.

The accession of William and Mary to the crown of England, involved a war with France, of which even these distant colonies felt the terrible effects, The Indians were furnished with arms and ammunition by the French in Canada, and excited to attack the English. The old scenes of savage warfare were now renewed. To protect themselves and their families against their barbarous foes, it was voted, Oct. 30, 1691, "that forasmuch as we apprehend it our duty to do what we may for our safe-

ty in this time of danger, that there shall be a fortification built for a shelter for our women and children."

The matter was left to a committee of seven, to determine where and of what nature the defences should be. Several years earlier a company of militia had been formed in town, and in 1683, the General Court passed an order that, "Thomas Fisk be captain, Charles Gott be lieutenant, and William Fisk be ensign of the first company in Wenham. Great, in those days, were the honors of the officers in "the trainband." Their names were never mentioned without prefixing the military title; they held the highest seats at church, and on all occasions took precedence of the untitled multitude. With all their sturdy republicanism, our forefathers were careful to render to every one his due share of honor, and not less careful that no one should assume a rank which did not belong to him. Even the title of Mr. which is now given to every one, however low his position in the social circle, was at first accorded to only two or three inhabitants of the town. But the distinctions of Mr. and Captain and Lieutenant have now but little respect. The aristocratical element in the people was not strong enough to stand the shock of the Revolution. But if public functionaries received much honor in those days, their pay was proportionally less. In 1692, Walter Fairfield was elected representative, and as towns then paid their own dele-

gates, he was allowed two shillings a day, while attending the General Court, out of which he was to pay his own expenses. In 1695, Capt. Thomas Fisk was paid "for going representative, for service as an assessor, and a day going to Ipswich, £2 9s."

The first settlers appear to have obtained their land by purchase, from the Indians, and one family at least, still hold their farm (now occupied by Mr. Daniel Perkins,) by a deed from its aboriginal possessor, and signed by him with an arrow, as his mark. Yet after the town had been settled more than sixty years, a claim to the soil was made by certain Indians, as will appear from the following record. "Dec. 10, 1700. Voted, that whereas, Samuel English, Joseph English and John Umpee, Indians, and, as they say, heirs to Moschanomett, late sagamore of Agawam, lay claim and challenge to the soil of our township, it is agreed that there shall be a committee chosen to treat with them, and examine into the claim and challenge which they, the said Indians, make of our land." This committee seem to have considered that the easiest way to settle the matter, was to pay the Indians for their title, especially as their demands were not very extravagant. Accordingly £4 16s. were raised by tax, and appropriated for the purpose. After this, we presume that not even the most scrupulous or the most sensitive purchaser could have a doubt as to the title by which the people of Wenham lay claim to the soil.



It has already been mentioned that there were large tracts of land within the town, which were not divided among particular owners, but held in common. One tract of six hundred acres lay in the easterly part of the town, extending from Grape-Vine bridge, as it is called, near the house of the late William Langmaid, to the Manchester line. Another tract included that part of the great swamp which lies in Wenham. Another portion lay west of Lord's Hill; and there were other smaller portions in different parts of the town. The ownership of these lands belonged to "the commoners," who were probably the descendants of the first settlers of the town, or had derived their rights by purchase from them. In some cases, too, where families had removed into the place, the town had voted to grant them a share in the common lands; for the town seemed to exercise a concurrent jurisdiction over them. Occasionally lots were granted from these lands to persons for their services, or sold to pay the debts of the town.

The management of these common lands was a continual subject of difficulty and contention. Orders innumerable were passed to prevent trespass, and to regulate the feeding of cattle and cutting of wood upon it. The inhabitants of the town were generally allowed to cut wood and timber for their own use, but not for sale, except by special permission. In spite, however, of every precau-

tion, complaints of trespass were continually made. Committees were appointed, stringent regulations were passed, and even the prosecutions which were repeatedly commenced against the offenders, proved ineffectual. The wood and timber continued to disappear.

Motions were early made in the town meetings, to divide the common lands equally among the proprietors, but various obstacles stood in the way of such a division. It was even questioned whether it could legally be done, without the unanimous consent of all concerned. Votes to divide them were repeatedly passed, one as early as 1669, but they were afterwards re-considered, or allowed to go by default. It was so evident, however, to every one that the lands in this state were very imperfectly cultivated, and that their real value could never thus be half realized, that all parties at length came to the conclusion that it was best to distribute all the lands equally among the proprietors. A committee was accordingly appointed to determine who were entitled to lots, as commoners. Of these there appeared to be sixty-three persons owning seventy-one shares. A meeting was then held, March 6, 1704-5, at which it was voted, with but one dissenting voice, "that all the commoners should have an equal share both for quantity and quality in whatever division should be agreed to." It was then ordered that convenient highways should be laid out for access to each lot,



and that the commoners should join in companies of eight, to each of which should be allowed an equal share in the division of the lands, and each company should appoint one of their number to assist in making the division. It was moreover agreed that wherever any company of eight should wish to divide their share among themselves individually, they should have power to do so.

As considerable interest was felt in this division of the commons, and several persons still hold the lots then drawn by their ancestors, the following list of the commoners, as then assorted in companies of eight, is here given.

*Who drew the first lot in the swamp.*

Walter Fairfield,  
Richard Hutton,  
Thomas Fisk, Sen.,  
John Barr,  
Josiah Dodge,  
David Batchelder,  
Robert Symonds,  
Robert Symonds, Jr.

*Who drew the second lot in the swamp.*

Benjamin Edwards,  
Thomas Edwards,  
Richard Knowlton,  
Mordecai Larcam,  
John Gott,  
Joseph Herrick,  
John Herrick,  
John Berry.

*Who drew the third lot in the swamp.*

William Fisk,  
James Friend,  
Joseph Fowler,  
Samuel Kimball, Sr.,  
John Coy,  
Thomas Kimball,  
John Stewart,  
John Edwards.

*Who drew the fourth lot in the swamp.*

Samuel Fisk, Jr.,  
Ruth Dodge, for her husband's estate.  
Mary Dodge,  
Henry Haggett,  
Wm. Knowlton,  
Jonathan Moulton,  
Benjamin Fisk,  
Samuel Fisk, Sr.

*Who drew the fifth lot in the swamp.*

Thomas Fisk, two shares.  
Walter Fairfield, two shares.  
Nath'l Waldron, two shares.  
William Dodge, one share.  
Zaccheus Goldsmith, one share.

*Who drew the sixth lot in the swamp.*

Richard Dodge,  
Thomas Patch, Sen.,  
John Perkins,  
Tobias Trow,  
Charles Gott, Jr.,  
Daniel Kilham,  
Stephen Patch,  
William Rogers.

*Who drew the seventh lot in the swamp.*

Mr. Hull,  
John Batchelder,  
John Dennis,  
Samuel Kimball, Jr.,  
Ebenezer Batchelder,  
William Fisk, Jr.,  
John Leech,  
Joseph Hocker.

*Who drew the eighth lot in the swamp.*

Joseph Batchelder,  
Caleb Kimball,  
John Kilham,  
David Maxey,  
Ephraim Kimball,  
Theophilus Rix,  
Joshua Wallis,  
Timothy Patch

*Who drew the ninth lot in the swamp.*

Mr. Gerrish, one share.  
Lieut. John Porter, three  
shares.

Thomas White, one share.  
Theophilus Fisk, one share.  
Widow Cue, one share.

A committee chosen by these companies, proceeded to divide the swamp and the common in the eastern part of the town into lots, which were drawn for by the different companies, on the 28th of November, 1705. The third and ninth divisions refusing to appoint any one to draw for them, the commoners made the appointment for them. The bounds of each lot are described at great length in the records, but it is unnecessary to repeat them here.

As the power of the commoners to divide the public lands, was questioned by some, a vote was passed at a town meeting, March 5, 1705-6, confirming their proceedings, and granting to each company of eight, the parcels of land of which they were already possessed. The common lands having been thus divided among the different companies, these afterwards subdivided them among themselves. Some smaller lots which were not included in this division, were sold to pay the current ex-

penses of the town. Various exchanges and sales of the lots thus distributed, are recorded about this time, from which it appears that they varied in value, from forty to fifty shillings.

This division of the common lands, was undoubtedly a wise measure. It ensured the better and more profitable cultivation of the lands themselves, and it also removed a constant source of wrangling and contention. A considerable portion of the records had previously been taken up with accounts of difficulties of this kind. Town meetings now became more peaceable, and the citizens, each attending to his own affairs, continued to increase and prosper.

The following half century was quite uneventful in the history of the town. The farmers cultivated their fields and gathered in their harvests in peace. At regular intervals the freemen assembled together and transacted the ordinary municipal business, of the town. That peculiar and distinctive feature of New England, the board of selectmen, has of course always existed. It is curious to observe how closely the town offices were, for a long period, confined to a few leading families. The Fisks, the Fairfields, the Gotts, the Porters, the Kimballs, the Tarboxes, the Dodges, and the Friends, seem to have possessed almost a monopoly of the important places. Tything-men were regularly elected to terrify refractory boys, and to keep a guard over the manners and morals of the people. Hog-reeve

was no nominal office in those days, when swine were allowed, as they were till after the Revolution, to go at large, "being duly ringed and yoked." Deer-reeves were annually chosen to protect the deer which were found quite abundant in the woods. Wolves howled in the forests, and occasionally annoyed the inhabitants so much that rewards were publicly offered, and appropriations made by the town, to any person who should destroy one. The roads, except the main county road from Salem to Ipswich were little more than cart paths and lanes leading to the various farms. Col. Porter has informed me that his mother told him when she first came to Wenham, which must have been about 1750, that they were obliged to trace their way by marks upon the trees. Each man lived for himself and very much within the circle of his family, satisfied with managing his own affairs and contented to have his neighbors do the same. Newspapers and books were extremely rare, and the means of travelling quite limited. For many years the inhabitants seem to have troubled themselves but very little about public affairs. From 1747 to 1767, a period of twenty years, the town sent only once a representative to the General Court. In those days each town was required to pay the salary and expenses of its own delegates, and this, with the fact that little interest was taken in State affairs, may perhaps account for it, that they so seldom sent any one.

The population of the town continued gradually to increase, from its settlement until 1725 or '30, after which it remained nearly stationary for a hundred years or more. At the death of Rev. Mr. Gerrish, in 1720, the number of inhabitants is stated to have been three times as large as at his ordination, in 1673. In 1733, the number of men paying a poll tax was 114; in 1750, they had decreased to 106, but in 1775, rose again to 123. From these data we may suppose the population of the town to have been about 500 persons — as many probably as it would support in the then rude state of agriculture and in the entire absence of the manufacturing arts.\* One son in every family usually remained at home to inherit the farm and see his parents comfortably supported in their old age; the rest of the family went abroad to seek their fortunes in the world, according to the approved New England style. Most of them probably emigrated to Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and the more recent towns in the central and western part of Massachusetts. Thus families originally settled in Wenham might now be traced into nearly if not quite every State in the Union.

\*Until the close of the Revolution it was a general practice for fathers to entail their property so that it could not be sold by their heirs. Even after the law authorizing it was repealed, the custom still continued, of giving to the oldest son, or to the one who remained at home, the largest share of the property. By this means, the estate was kept together and preserved often for many generations, in the family name. Probably there have been more changes of real estate during the last thirty years than occurred in the one hundred and sixty years from the settlement of the town to the beginning of this century.

Thirty-three, out of the first sixty-three years of the last century, were consumed in wars with the French and Indians. Wenham did not suffer so much as many of the frontier towns, from the direct assaults of the savage, but she contributed freely her share of recruits to the forces raised by the colony, for the common defense. The burdens of the war were still more felt in the taxes imposed for its maintenance, and in the frequent derangements of the currency, produced by the large remissions of bills of credit. After the war of George II., which ended in 1748, the value of these bills became so much depreciated that the town was obliged to add £220 to the salary of Rev. Mr. Warren, in addition to the £130 a year on which he was settled. Yet Mr. Swain who was ordained two years later, was contented with but £70 a year, which in the new emission was perhaps really worth as much as £350 of the old. It is hardly possible for us who have never known the evils incident to an uncertain and fluctuating currency, to conceive of the annoyance and embarrassments which it must have occasioned. In many places salaries were made to depend upon the price of provisions, and rose or fell according to the cost of the various necessities of life. Farmers were obliged to take the pay for their productions, in bills, which in six months, perhaps, were not worth half what they had been taken for. In order to live at all, the people were obliged to use a de-



gree of economy which their descendants would consider distressing.

Their ordinary fare was frugal but wholesome. The well known bean porridge, for breakfast; bread, cheese and cider for luncheon; pork and beans, or salt fish, or, perchance, a boiled dish for dinner, with bread or hasty pudding and milk, to which, if it were a special occasion, gingerbread, and apple or berry pie, were added, for supper; such was their ordinary plain but substantial diet. Flour was seldom seen; bread was generally made of corn, barley, or rye meal; hominy and johnny cake were favorite dishes. Fresh meat was a rare luxury, only known when, at rare intervals, a calf or sheep was killed, or when the fortunate hunter brought in a supply of game. It was a long time before potatoes were introduced to general use; cabbages, onions, beans and turnips, were the staple vegetables. Tomatoes and many other articles which now stock our markets, were wholly unknown. Tea and coffee were scarcely known till the time of the Revolution.\* Their diet was farinaceous, rather than animal, and if not rich, it was at least wholesome. Dyspepsia was scarcely heard

\* During the war, "liberty tea," as it was called was very generally used as a substitute for that of China. It was made of the four leaved loose-strife, or "*Lysimochia quadrifolia*." The stalks were pulled up, stripped of their leaves and then boiled, after which the leaves were steeped in the liquor of the stalks, and then removed in platters and put in an oven to dry. This tea, which sold for sixpence a pound, would go as far as the same quantity of China tea. In place of coffee, burnt rye, peas, beans and bread were often used. The principal beverage, however, was cider or home brewed beer."

of, and the demand for "physic and the physician," was evidently much less than in these degenerate days of luxury and progress.

The houses of the first settlers were, probably mere cabins, built of logs. Of the structures built a little later, many still remain, but generally, so altered, that those who built them could hardly recognize the work of their own hands. A few of them still retain the gable ends and projecting second story — so built, it is said, for protection against the "bloody salvages." Timber was abundant in those days, and, as the architects consulted strength and durability, rather than taste, they often consumed materials enough on one building to construct two or three in our times. The houses usually contained few apartments, but these, although low studded, were of good size. Often, only one room was finished, the rest of the house being used for drying apples and storing corn and other vegetables, or appropriated by the children for their play. At one end was an immense chimney, with a fire-place large enough to hold a good sized "back-log," and also to accommodate the younger members of the family. No lack of fuel, then; thirty to forty cords of wood was the common yearly allowance for the minister—an amount which would now be worth more than the entire salary then given. The windows were small, protected by shutters, and often covered with oiled paper. The door was strong, and though opened by



a latch-string, was thick enough to be bullet proof. The floor was of split pine, roughly smoothed with an adze, while the hearth of large, flat stones, occupied one entire side of the room. The furniture was of the simplest character — two or three high-backed chairs, a massive table, a settle, and perhaps a large chest, with carved front, while around the walls were placed some birch-bark boxes for clothing. In the cupboard might be seen wooden bowls and trenchers, horn drinking cups, and earthen platters. An old, but trusty fire-lock, and a sword, if the occupant chanced to be an officer in the militia, hung from the ceiling. On the mantle stood an hour-glass for the purpose of marking the time, and beside it the well thumbed Bible, which, with possibly an almanac, and a copy of the Pilgrim's Progress or Saint's Rest, constituted the entire literary stock of the family. The houses that were built a little later, say one hundred to one hundred and fifty years ago, were usually two stories high, with the second story jutting out a foot or more over the lower. The roofs were generally hipped or gambrel, and the windows were about two and a half feet long by one and a half wide, and set with diamond-shaped panes of glass three or four inches long. As lime was little known or worked in those days, the walls of houses were daubed with clay mixed with straw. The rooms, instead of being papered, were nicely white-washed. Few houses had more than one chimney. In

place of a marble or painted mantel-piece, the fire-places were frequently ornamented with Dutch tiles representing Scripture scenes. The parlor was sometimes painted, but oftener the floor was sanded; carpets were unknown in the country. Few houses were painted on the outside, as late as 1800.

As to clothing, that of our forefathers was usually of their own manufacture. The act of 1642, requires that the Selectmen should, among other things, see to it that the "boys who were set to keep cattle, be set to some other implement with all, as spinning upon the rock, knitting, weaying tape, &c. They are also to provide that a sufficient quantity of materials, as hemp, flax, &c., be raised in their several towns, and tools and implements provided for working out the same." Thus every family was expected to do its own spinning and weaving. The hum of the great wheel and the clang of the loom were to be heard in every household. Every mother was tailor and dress-maker for her own family. Linsey-woolsey and homespun had not yet given place to broad-cloths, silks and satins. Our ancestors were not so richly nor so elegantly dressed as their descendants, nor would they have appeared to so good advantage in the ball-room or the promenade; yet beneath their rough exterior, their hearts beat as warm and true as in any of their more polished but more effeminate posterity.

As already intimated, few events of interest occurred for the history of Wenham, in the early part of the last century, and some of those come in more appropriately in other chapters. In 1714, the people of Ipswich Hamlet, many of whom had previously attended public worship in Wenham, withdrew and formed a church in their own town. Their loss, however, did not seem to be very severely felt, since, besides paying them for the part which they owned in the Wenham meeting-house, the people proceeded to raise £60 for repairing the house that same year. In the course of these repairs the ceilings were, for the first time, plastered.

From the settlement of the town especial pains were taken to prevent the settlement of any vagrant or worthless person within its limits. Numerous instances are detailed in the records, where such persons were summarily warned out. From many similar examples, we select one dated Feb. 11, 1714: "At a meeting of the selectmen, they appointed the Town Clerk to draw a warrant to constable Eben. Batchelder, to warn Margaret Poland to depart and leave our town, and it was done and sent accordingly." "I have warned said Margaret Poland, widow, to depart and leave the town, and Samuel Patch, that he don't entertain her. Feb. 25, 1714. E. Batchelder."

The selectmen also exercised a careful supervision over the morals of the actual inhabitants, as may appear from the following record: "Feb. 27,

1719. Upon complaint made to the selectmen of Wenham that Robert Symonds, of said town, doth live as a common tippler, misspending his time and estate at the tavern, greatly to the damage of his family, these are to give notice to the tavern-keeper that he do not entertain him in his house, to sit tippling and misspending his time upon penalty of the law."

In 1725, the town agreed with Rev. Robert Ward, their pastor, to take a lot of land which he had purchased, and to hold it for the use of the parish. This lot, which contained three or four acres, was at the the corner, where the road to the Neck turns off from the highway to Ipswich. It was held by the town for the use of the minister, for more than a hundred years. It was at last sold by a vote of the town, April, 1840, and the proceeds appropriated to building a parsonage.

From 1732, till his death in 1742, the town was represented in the General Court by the Hon. Wm. Fairfield. He was regularly re-elected every year, and by a large majority. During the session of 1741, he was Speaker of the House of Representatives, at that time the highest office in the gift of the people, the Governor and Lieut. Governor being appointed by the King.

In these days every town was required to pay its own deputy, but in case a town failed to send once within a certain number of years, it was liable to a fine. In this state of things, men who

were possessed of property and leisure, and withal, had a share of ambition, would sometimes offer to forego their salary, and even to pay their own expenses in case they were elected. Such an arrangement seems to have been made several times in the early history of Wenham. But even so, it was not always possible to secure the services of a representative. The people seem to have been so absorbed in their own affairs as often to take less interest than is usually now the case in the affairs of the nation. Thus in 1749, May 17th, we find the following record: "At a meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of Wenham, lawfully warned and assembled in order to make choice of a person to represent them in a great and general court in Boston, upon Wednesday, the thirty-first day of May current, after several trials made for the choice of a person for said service, none could be obtained, and therefore the compassionate regards of the Honorable, the House of Representatives were humbly requested." Whether these "compassionate regards" were obtained or not, history does not inform us. At all events, no representative was chosen for six years, and but two during the twenty-five years which followed. A somewhat similar record to the above is found May 14, 1736, viz.: "At a town meeting to choose a representative, we being met together, have endeavored by all the best means we could, but could not have a legal choice, and so dismissed the meet-

ing and returned the precept, praying the favor of the Honorable Court of Representatives."

During the French War of 1756 to 1763, the resources of most of the New England towns were severely taxed. Several of the inhabitants of Wenham enlisted in the regiment commanded by Col. Ichabod Plaisted, of Salem. Perhaps in consequence of this, the Rev. Mr. Swain was chosen as their chaplain, and accompanied them in the expedition to Crown Point. Two years earlier, the French settlements in Acadia were reduced, and the inhabitants forced to remove. The event has been recently brought into general notice by the thrilling tale of the wanderings of Evangeline, as related by one of our most popular poets. One of the families appears to have fallen to the share of Wenham, and repeated orders are given by the selectmen, for various articles for their support. Their names are nowhere found, being probably too hard for the learning of the town officers. They are mentioned simply as "neutral French," or the "French family." They are supposed to have occupied the place now known as Herrick's Corner. The house was at this time owned by Mr. Jonathan Porter, and was rented by him, with the garden belonging to it, for 20s. per annum. This rent was afterwards changed to "14s. and 8d. and the herbage of the burying place." Whether Gabriel or Evangeline visited this family in their wanderings, we are not informed. The "French neu-



trals" were finally disposed of, Dec. 20, 1762, to Dr. Putnam, of Danvers.

At the commencement of this war, all the colonies north of Virginia met by their delegates, at Albany, and drew up a plan of union for the different colonies, by which they might co-operate more effectually against their enemies, the French and Indians. This instrument was signed by all the deputies, except those from Connecticut, on the 4th of July, 1754, just twenty-two years before the Declaration of Independence. It provided that a General Assembly should be formed by deputies from each of the colonies, and that this Assembly should have the power of enacting laws, imposing taxes, arranging for the common defence, &c., subject to a veto from the Governor General, who was to be appointed by the King. It will be perceived that this plan of union much resembles the one afterwards adopted by the provincial Congress. It proved, however, to be extremely distasteful to the people. A town meeting of the inhabitants of Wenham was called to consider the subject, and "the question being put, whether the plan for a general union of the several colonies on this continent shall pass to be enacted, it was unanimously resolved in the negative." And then a resolution was passed, which was also unanimous, instructing Capt. John Dodge, their representative, "to use the utmost of his endeavors to prevent any plan for a union, that may be concerted by the

General Court.” The latter part of this resolution probably referred to another plan proposed by the mother country, that the Governors, and one of the Council from each colony, should annually meet and be invested with similar powers to those above granted to the assembly of deputies. Neither of these plans was carried into effect. It is not unlikely that the local attachment of each colony to its own charter and form of government had its influence in the matter; but the principal opposition arose from jealousy of giving the mother country or the King too much power. It is worthy of remark, as showing the spirit of the colonies, even at that early day, that they volunteered, if the union should go into effect, to manage the war upon this continent, without any help from England.

The part which the people of Wenham bore in the events of these old wars, is unfortunately not recorded. The men who took part in those scenes have long since passed away. In those tedious and often bloody campaigns, we have no doubt that the people of this town contributed their full share both of blood and treasure. It has been estimated that nearly one-third of the men in the colony, able to do military duty, were called into the field in the course of this war, and every town was compelled to furnish its quota both of troops and provisions. The burdens, which our ancestors had to bear in these protracted struggles, were such as



can hardly be estimated or imagined by the people of this generation. It is no small proof of the inherent energy and vitality of the colonies, that they not only sustained these continual drafts upon their strength and resources, but continued to increase in numbers as well as in material wealth and prosperity in spite of them.

At this period, much of the country was yet covered with extensive forests, in which wild beasts were still not uncommon. Between 1752 and 1757, the wolves seem to have been unusually numerous and troublesome. In 1754, one article in a warrant for a town meeting was, "to see what measures the town will come into for the destruction of wolves." Accordingly a vote was passed to give, in conjunction with the towns of Ipswich, Manchester, Gloucester, and Beverly, "A bounty of £6 13s. 4d. in addition to the province bounty, to any person or persons who shall kill a wolf, or wolf's whelp, within the limits of the towns aforesaid." The next year a vote was also passed, offering "to Jona. Page, of Lunenburg, or Robert Dodge of Beverly, or any other person, who shall kill a wolf within the limits of the above towns, during the next twelve months, the bounty of 28s. out of the money of the town, for each wolf so killed."

After the close of the French War, the currency became again depreciated. A committee appointed in 1765, to investigate the effect of this upon Mr.

Swain's salary, "and to run a parallel between the price of the necessaries of life, from this day back to the day when he was settled with us in the work of the ministry," reported that £57 ought to be added to his salary, which was originally £70. In addition to this, £30 was granted to him the next spring, "to relieve him from immediate embarrassments."

The prices of labor on the highway, were fixed in 1763, at two shillings per day, for every man; one shilling and fourpence for every yoke of oxen; one shilling for a cart, the same for a horse, and one shilling fourpence for a plough.

## REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD.

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WE come now to a most interesting and important portion of the history of the town. But I must commence with apologizing for the meagre and unsatisfactory sketch, which even after the most careful research, it is in my power to give of it. The persons who lived and acted a prominent part in the scenes of that day, are all gone. Scarcely one or two survive, who can faintly remember the closing scenes of the war. Had the task been attempted twelve or fifteen years ago, while several who distinctly remembered those scenes, were still alive, many important particulars might have been preserved, which are now irrecoverably lost. Many anecdotes and traditions of things trivial in themselves, would still have been valuable, as showing the spirit of the times, and giving breadth and fullness to a picture of which we are able to present only the rude outlines.

The idea of taxing the colonies by Act of Parliament, for the benefit of the home government, had

long been entertained in England. Sir Robert Walpole, when the proposal was made to him in 1735, while he was Prime Minister, replied, "I leave it to some of my successors, who are bolder than I." And Pitt, twenty years later, said, "I will never burn my fingers with an American Stamp Act." But soon after the French War, the ministry, not perceiving the difficulties which those great statesmen had foreseen, determined to impose a tax upon the colonies. The beginning of these measures was the odious Stamp Act, passed in 1765, and the manner in which it was received, might have shown the people of England that the inhabitants of the various colonies knew and prized their rights, and were not disposed to give them up without a struggle. The Stamp Act was soon repealed, and the people rejoiced as if their troubles were at an end. But other measures of taxation were speedily introduced, including a tariff upon glass, paper, and tea. The duties upon these articles were also taken off in 1770, except those upon tea. The merchants, in many towns of the State, at once determined to import no more tea, and the people sustained them in that resolution. The measure found more favor with the men than with the female part of the community, who, though they were generally on the side of freedom, were many of them unwilling to give up their favorite beverage. Many amusing anecdotes are told of the manner in which they used secretly to obtain

and drink it in the absence of their husbands, whose unexpected return home sometimes sadly disappointed their hopes and deranged their schemes.

In 1768, the town appointed Benjamin Fairfield, as their delegate "to convene with such persons as shall be sent from the several towns in this province, as a committee of convention, to meet in Faneuil Hall, in Boston, that such measures may be consulted and advised, as His Majesty's service and the peace and safety of his subjects in this province may require." This convention continued its sessions for several days, and the difficulties between the mother country and her colonies were fully discussed.

The people of Boston were, from their position and circumstances, placed in the van of the revolutionary movement. But though they thus stood in the forefront of the battle, they had ample assurances of sympathy and support from the country towns. Committees of Correspondence were early appointed in the various towns to whom the people of Boston communicated respecting their grievances, and thus a mutual good understanding was kept up between them and every part of the commonwealth. Thus the inhabitants of the country were informed of every event of importance as soon as it occurred, and their minds were gradually prepared for prompt and decisive action, when the hour of action had arrived. The example of Mas-

sachusetts, in this respect, was followed by other States, and these committees, by diffusing information and promoting harmony of sentiment and action, became an important part of the machinery of the Revolution.

A meeting of the people of Wenham was called May 19, 1773, to take into consideration the letters and pamphlet of the Boston Committee of Correspondence. Benjamin Fairfield was chosen moderator, and the subject was referred to a committee of five persons, viz., Messrs. Benjamin Fairfield, John Friend, Daniel Kilham, Jr., Tyler Porter, and Edward Waldron, with instructions to make a report at an adjourned meeting. This report was as follows :

“ We, the subscribers, being a committee appointed to take into consideration the Boston letters from the Committee of Correspondence of said town, wherein are inserted certain grievances, having maturely considered the same, are of opinion that the rights of the colonies, and of this, in particular, are infringed upon in many instances, and therefore is a great grievance to all His Majesty’s loyal subjects, and has a direct tendency to the destruction of our happy constitution. We will not descend into particulars, they having been so often enumerated before, but only mention some of the most obvious, viz. : the giving our chief fortress into the hands of His Majesty’s troops, over

whom our Governor saith he hath no power or command; and 2dly, the appointing salaries to our Chief Justices at home, and that we are denied the privilege of choosing an agent, and hereby rendered unable to petition His Majesty, but by way of the Governor, who is perhaps the very man we want to petition against. We are far from being easy under the present administration of government, and the situation of our civil rights and privileges, and ardently wish they may be redressed speedily. Having no representative to give instructions to, we shall always be ready to join with the town of Boston and others in all constitutional methods, to preserve our civil and religious privileges inviolate, and may that Almighty Being who governs all things in infinite mercy, preside in all our councils, and direct to such measures as he himself shall approve of, and may we ever be a people favored of heaven, and may this become Immanuel's land."

Dated at Wenham, June 30, 1773,

And signed by	BENJ. FAIRFIELD,	} Com.
	JOHN FRIEND,	
	DANIEL KILHAM, JR.	
	TYLER PORTER,	

The above report was "accepted by a great majority," and it was voted that a copy be sent to the Committee of Correspondence at Boston." This was two years before the battle of Lexington, and shows how gradually and thoroughly the people were prepared for that great event. About the



same time, the selectmen examined the town's stock of ammunition, (which used to be kept under the pulpit in the meeting-house,) and found it in good condition. An anecdote is still related which may be worth preserving, as showing the spirit of the times. Mr. William Fairfield at this time, lived in the house now occupied by Mr. William Porter. Some British troops were marching across the country, and their uniforms were suddenly discovered, as they ascended the little eminence by the burial-ground. The others present proposed to flee; "not a step," cried Mrs. Fairfield; "give me a spit, and I'll pepper one of the villians." Armed with this rude weapon, she stood her ground manfully, but the soldiers passed on their way without turning aside to molest her.

The next year the Boston Committee of Correspondence made other communications to the town, and Messrs. Billy Porter, John Friend, Stephen Dodge, William Cleaves, and Tyler Porter were appointed a committee to make a reply, which unfortunately has not been preserved. At the same time, the town voted to pay its proportional part in any sum of money, which might be granted by a provincial Congress. In September, 1774, Benjamin Fairfield was chosen to attend the General Court, which had been summoned to meet at Salem, and received instructions "to join the other members in forming a provincial Congress, if need be." In December of the same year, Mr. Fairfield was

re-elected to this Congress, which met at Watertown. A vote was also passed "to raise fifteen minute men, and that each man shall have one shilling for every half day he is mustered by his officers to exercise." The following persons were appointed a committee "to draw up articles, and to enlist the men," viz., Messrs. Billy Porter, Richard Dodge, Jr., and Matthew Fairfield. A fine of £10 was imposed upon every one who should enlist and fail to be properly equipped, or to attend upon the exercises according to the direction of the officers. Upon the recommendation of the provincial Congress, a collection was taken up for the poor of Boston, who had suffered severely in the interruptions of business, occasioned by the occupation of the town by the British troops.

These preparations indicated that the critical moment was at hand. The slightest spark only was needed to set the whole country on fire. The attempt of the British troops to seize the American stores at Concord, kindled at once the flame of war. The farmer left his plough, the mechanic his workshop, and bidding a hasty adieu to their wives and little ones, rushed to the scene of action. The people of Wenham were too remote to have any share in the deeds of that illustrious day. But here, as elsewhere, the tidings lighted a flame of fire in the breast of every man who heard of it. Almost the entire population of the town enlisted in the service. One hundred and thirty-seven men,

which must have included almost every able-bodied man in the town, were (for a short time) under arms, although it is probable that many of them served but a few days or weeks. Quite a large number, however, remained in the service, from two months to a year.

May 22d, Mr. Benjamin Fairfield was chosen a delegate to the provincial Congress at Watertown, and a committee of safety was appointed "to guard against our enemies, and to conduct as they think best for the safety of the town." This committee consisted of Messrs. Caleb Kimball, Tyler Porter, Daniel Kilham, Jr., Stephen Dodge, and Thomas Kimball.

The British troops, in the meantime, remained closely shut up in Boston, narrowly watched by the provincial troops, who occupied the surrounding towns. Gaining courage by delay, the latter soon ventured upon offensive operations. On the night preceding the 17th of June, they ventured into Charlestown, and erected some hasty fortifications upon Bunker's hill. The next day followed that desperate and glorious conflict, in which an ill-armed and half-disciplined militia thrice repelled the assaults of veterans. "That day," Gen. Burgoyne wrote to his superiors at home, "America was lost to the British Empire." In the scenes of that day, the citizen soldiers of Wenham bore their part.

No other battles occurred upon the soil of Mas-

sachusetts. The remainder of the campaign was spent in drilling the troops and in blockading and harassing the English in their stronghold. Early the next year, Gen. Washington, by fortifying Dorchester heights, compelled the British troops to evacuate Boston, and the war which had opened thus gloriously upon Lexington and Bunker's hill, was transferred to other States, where the enemy hoped to find an easier field for operations and a less determined resistance. In consequence of this change in the seat of war, the people of New England were relieved from the immediate danger of assault, and were left to pursue their own affairs in comparative quiet. They did not, however, lose their interest in the obstinate and protracted struggle, which was carried on during seven long, weary years, in the middle and southern sections of the Union. No State contributed more recruits to that noble continental army, which, under the command of Washington, was the principal instrument in securing our independence. Nor was any State more liberal in furnishing the supplies of money and provisions, by which that army was sustained. Every year, as long as the war lasted, we find the people of Wenham providing the required number of soldiers, equipping them for the war, and taking care for their wives and children, during their long absence. £10 a year was paid by the town, to each soldier, in addition,

to what they might receive from the State, besides a bounty at the first enlistment.

From the report of a committee which has been preserved, it appears that at the time this was made, Dec. 23, 1776, the town had already paid, in this manner, £574 5s. 6d., since the battle of Lexington, which was about a year and a half previous. At this time, twenty-five of the citizens of Wenham had been a year or more in the army, and thirty-six others had served for periods varying from six months to a year. After this, no regular account has been preserved, of the services of our people. But from the muster rolls, still preserved at the State House, and from the pension lists, we learn that the town furnished its full quota of recruits for each campaign. Unfortunately, no one is now living who is able to give those incidents, details and particulars on these points, which we should so much like to know.

March 13, 1776, the town chose Messrs. John Friend, Tyler Porter, Stephen Dodge, Caleb Kimball, and Jacob Dodge, as a Committee of Safety for the ensuing year, with instructions similar to those of their predecessors. As after this year the war was removed from this vicinity, no committee seems to have been subsequently needed.

On July 4th, of this year, the celebrated Declaration of Independence was enacted by Congress. It was approved by the people of Wenham, and was copied out in full, and in an elegant hand, upon the records of the town.

Dec. 9th, it was voted to grant the sum of £6, as a bounty for each soldier who should serve three months, and £200 was raised for this purpose. Two months later, £15 was granted to every soldier, who would enlist for the campaign, and £18 to all who had already served in the continental army, and were willing to re-enlist; and the town treasurer was authorized to borrow £250 in order to pay this bounty. Thirty-one votes were also given for County Registrar, the first office left vacant by change of government, which was filled by a popular election. It was also resolved to supply the families of the soldiers who were engaged in the continental army, with corn, pork, beef, wood, wool, flax and sauce,<sup>7</sup> and Messrs. Jacob Dodge, Thomas Kimball and Peter Dodge were chosen as a committee for the purpose.

This year the small pox broke out here as well as in some of the adjoining towns. An inoculating house was provided, where those who wished, could have the disease in a milder form, and those who were seized with it unexpectedly, could be taken care of. The disease continued to prevail at intervals for several years. When a person was affected with it, he was carried at once to the "pest house," and the house and yards thoroughly smoked. while fences were thrown up across the way, to prevent the risk of infection. It is hardly possible for us to form an idea of the terror, with which this fearful disorder was regarded. Inoculation



was at best a very doubtful remedy, it being quite uncertain whether more was not done by it to increase than to check the spread of the disease. Since 1800, vaccination and improved methods of treatment have rendered almost harmless this once terrible scourge of the human race.

As the war went on, large amounts of scrip were issued by the various Legislatures, in payment of the soldiers, or for other purposes. These at first were taken at par, but as the quantity continued to increase without any prospect of their being redeemed in specie, their value rapidly declined. At first an attempt was made to compel their circulation. A convention was held at Concord for the purpose of appreciating the paper currency, in the results of which the town voted to concur. Accordingly a committee of nine was appointed to regulate the prices of labor, and of the various necessities of life. But every effort to sustain the paper currency was in vain. People would not and could not be compelled to sell at the prices fixed by committees or conventions. The continental paper-money continued to depreciate till 1781, when a silver dollar was worth forty of the new, and thirty-two dollars of the old emission.

This depreciation of the currency may be traced in the sums of money raised by the town in successive years. In 1776, £200 were raised for the expenses of the town and the war; this appropriation was increased in '77, to £600; in '78, to



£1,200 ; in '79, to £4,000 ; and October, 1780, it was voted to raise £40,000, (\$133,333), for the expenses of that year. Mr. Swain's salary was increased by adding £100 ; then £300 ; then £300 more were given him for teaching school ; then £600 per year. After that it was paid in silver or produce. In 1780, £1500, (\$5,000) were voted for the support of schools. After 1778, the selectmen were paid for their services, at the rate of a bushel of corn a day. !

Committees were appointed from year to year, to procure the number of soldiers required for the war, with instructions to obtain them from within the town if they could, and if not, from abroad. At the time of the greatest scarcity of specie, in 1781, \$100 a year, "in hard money," were offered, ' to each man who would enlist into the continental army, for three years, or during the war. This, which was in addition to their claims upon the State, for pay, pensions, &c., must be considered a generous compensation, when the wages of a day's labor was only two shillings. The town was also heavily taxed for beef and provisions to supply the army. In 1780, the following sums were paid for this purpose, viz., to Mr Jacob Dodge, £1,529 ; to Richard Dodge, £2,157 18s., to Tyler Porter, £1,890. The next year the bills for army supplies are all reckoned under one head, and amount to £13,140 ! The sum of £16,000, (\$53,333) had been voted.

Mr. Stephen Dodge was chosen a delegate to the convention, which met at Concord to form a Constitution for the State. The constitution which they proposed was not, however, acceptable to the people of the town, nor was it generally popular, and, in consequence, it never went into operation.

May 19, 1780, is still memorable as the *dark day*. The sun rose clear, but soon became obscured, and the darkness continued to increase till one o'clock P. M. Candles were lighted, fowls retired to roost, and all nature assumed the appearance of night. This darkness extended over the State of Massachusetts, but was thickest in Essex county. The night which followed, was also extremely dark until about midnight, when the clouds were dispersed, and the moon and stars appeared in their brilliancy. The superstitious were greatly alarmed at these phenomena, some supposing that the day of judgment had indeed come; others, that it portended war and disaster. The cause of this darkness is supposed to be an accumulation of dense clouds, which had been formed by the smoke from extensive fires in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

April 2, 1781, was the first election for Governor, Lieut. Governor and Senators. The vote stood for Governor, John Hancock, 28; for Lieut. Governor, Thomas Cushing, 28; for Senators, Elbridge Gerry, John Pickering, Samuel Holten, Stephen Choate, Jona. Greenleaf and Samuel Phil-

lips, 28; being thus unanimous throughout—a result not common in later elections. The State government was thus re-organized, and that order of things established, under which we still continue to live.

I will close this brief and imperfect sketch of the revolutionary period, by a list, as far as I have been able to procure it, from the records of the town and the archives at the State House, of those who were engaged in that memorable struggle.

#### MINUTE MEN.

John Friend, Jr., Abraham Brown, Eben'r Batchelder, Israel Batchelder, Geo. Dwinell, Nath'l Gott, Eben'r Kimball, Israel A. Dodge, Francis Porter, Asa Porter, Nath'l Ober, Josiah Ober, Jr., Samuel Ober, Amos Knowlton, Isaac Porter. — Total, 15.

Names of those who served six weeks or more previous to 1777.

Asa Porter, Capt. Matthew Fairfield, Israel Batchelder, Joseph Batchelder, Josiah Batchelder, Jr., Daniel Rogers, Simon Dodge, Israel Dodge, Jr., Jas. Poland, Samuel Webber, Andrew Cole, John Hilliard, Abraham Brown, Capt. Billy Porter, Thos. Knowlton, Nath'l Poland, Abraham Knowlton, Amos Knowlton, Capt. Richard Dodge, Newel Davison, Caleb Knowlton, Joseph Webber, Capt. John Dodge, Reuben Patch, Eben'r Porter, Jr., Josiah Herrick, Isaac Giddings, Jr., Cornelius Baker, David Harris, Nath'l Gott, Sam'l Raymond, John Friend, Jr., Bartholomew Dodge, Sam'l Ober, Josiah Ober, Jr., Asa Kimball, Ephraim Kimball, Jos. Kimball, Amos Batchelder, Nath'l Porter, Jona. Low, Tyler Porter, Nath'l Ober, John Perkins, Sam'l Brown, Daniel Kilham, Skipper Dodge, Benjamin

Dodge, Benj. Edwards, Abram Edwards, Wm. Dodge, Abner Haggett, Edward Waldron, Nathan Brown, Abram Wyatt, John Giddings, Amos Lefavour, Wm. Cleaves, Andrew Allen, Francis Porter, Israel A. Dodge, Moses Brown, Jonathan Fisk, Jona. Moulton, Wm. Webber, Thos. Kimball, Sam'l Kimball, Caleb Kimball, Eben'r Batchelder, Jr., John Friend, John Dodge, Isaac Porter, Daniel Herrick, Eben. Kimball, Thomas Perkins, John Kilham, Jacob Dodge, Eli Messervy, Robert Dodge, Aaron Lee, Peter Dodge, Sam'l Quarles, Stephen Dodge, Amos Dodge, Isaac Patch, Dea. Sam'l Tarbox, John Dodge 3d., Jonas Kilham, Abel Dodge.

Of these, the first twenty-five had served, Jan., 1777, a year or more; the next thirty-three from six to twelve months, and the remainder from one to six months.

The following persons served during the later campaigns of the war, and mostly out of New England.

Maj. Billy Porter, Lieut. Walter Fairfield, Asa Porter, Asa Kimball, Wm. Poland, Abraham Knowlton, Daniel Redington, Jonathan Goodhue, a negro servant of Tyler Porter, Sam'l Ober, Simon Dodge, Abram Dodge, Pelatiah Brown, Edmund Kimball, John Moulton, Amos Batchelder, Joshua Herrick, Nath'l Friend, Wm. Webber, Andrew Allen, Isaac Patch, John Hooker, John Perkins, York Freeman, Thomas Webber.

## CIVIL HISTORY.

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SINCE the Revolution, the history of the town has furnished few events of general interest or importance. Times of peace and prosperity are seldom distinguished by incidents worthy of much note. Hence, periods of the greatest national progress and improvement, are often most barren to the historian.

The return of peace here, as elsewhere, was received with the liveliest joy and exultation. The country had passed through an arduous and almost hopeless struggle. The rebellious colonies had become a great, a free, and an independent nation. They had achieved all for which they had contended, but it had been done at a great sacrifice both of blood and treasure, and it was many years before the country recovered from the exhaustion consequent upon these almost superhuman efforts. Pecuniary difficulties and embarrassments were general and severe, in consequence of the debts contracted during the war. There was an almost universal stagnation of commerce and of business of every kind. The old paper currency was worth-

less and specie was scarcely known. This state of things produced much discontent and uneasiness, and resulted in the western part of Massachusetts, in "Shay's Rebellion," in 1786. The people of Wenham, though suffering as much as any others, from the hardships of the times, stood by the regular government. The old soldiers of the Revolution, when summoned by the proper authority, again buckled on their swords, and marched under the command of Col. Wade, of Ipswich, to suppress the insurrection. The rebels were speedily dispersed and order was again restored.

Soon after the Revolution, public attention was called to the vast regions west of the Alleghanies, which had been granted to the United States, by the treaty of 1783. The fertility of the soil, salubrity of the climate, and the low rates at which the public lands were sold to actual settlers, were strong inducements for emigration, to the surplus population of the Atlantic States. The young, the hopeful, and the venturesome, were eager to take up the line of march for the land of which they had heard such wonderful accounts. From our own neighborhood started the first expedition to explore and settle those unknown wilds. It was "a long, ark-like wagon, covered with black canvas, and inscribed on the outside, in large letters, to Marietta, on the Ohio." This expedition, under the care of Dr. Cutler, of Hamilton, and in which several of the people of Wenham took an active

part, founded the first town in the State of Ohio — a State which now contains more than two millions of inhabitants, to whom not Old England but New England is a father-land. Many persons will recall with pleasure, numerous anecdotes of this expedition, as related by the late John T. Dodge, Esq., who was actively concerned in it, but who afterwards returned, and was for many years a prominent citizen of Wenham.

A vote was passed in 1785, to repair the monument over the grave of the Rev. Joseph Gerrish. It will be remembered that Mr. Gerrish was pastor of the church for nearly fifty years, and his death occurred more than sixty years before the passage of this vote. This act, on the part of the town, shows that his memory was still revered, and his labors not forgotten. Col. Porter has informed me that he assisted on this occasion, in placing the present slab which marks the site of Mr. Gerrish's grave.

The next year the town voted, "to petition the General Court for liberty to erect a bridge over Beverly Ferry." The idea of this was probably suggested by the bridge, which had recently been built to connect Boston and Charlestown. With the increase of population and travel, the inconvenience of a ferry must have been felt quite sensibly. The petition was not at this time granted. But so anxious were the people for a bridge, that the next year the town chose two agents, Capt<sup>l</sup>



John Gardner and Capt. Richard Dodge, "to represent them at the Hon. General Court, now sitting in Boston, to satisfy the Legislature, of the propriety and reasonableness of the petition of George Cabot, Esq., and others, respecting building a bridge over Beverly Ferry." This time the prayer of the petitioners was granted, and the next year the bridge was opened for travel. The right to take toll, which has been a source of much profit to the proprietors, was granted for seventy years, which expired in 1858, when it was taken by the State, to be held until a sufficient fund has been raised for its maintainance.

Dec. 26, 1787, Mr. Jacob Herrick was chosen a delegate to the convention which was held at the State House, in Boston, January, 1788, "to take under consideration the late constitution or form of government proposed for their assent and ratification." This convention, one of the most important which ever met in the State, after considerable discussion, voted in favor of adopting the present Constitution of the United States, although it was not carried without strenuous opposition. The vote of Wenham, by its delegate, was cast in favor of the Constitution.

The swine, who for more than a century had enjoyed the freedom of the town, (coupled only with the restriction that they should wear a yoke and be adorned with a ring,) were, in 1790, deprived by a formal vote, of all their ancient and hith-

erto undisputed privileges. For them, no more delightful rambles in highways and byeways; no more moonlight serenades; no more roving at large, over waste lots, or through the forests. We fancy that we can almost hear their dolorous grunts of indignation. But all opposition, notwithstanding their well-known obstinacy, has been in vain. From that time they have been obliged to remain in their solitary pens. With the duties, the glory of the name of hog-reeve has departed. But the swine did not lack for friends and advocates. At an adjourned meeting, their partisans rallied and endeavored to get the previous vote re-considered. We doubt not their cause was eloquently supported, but all in vain. Their masters, in acquiring their own freedom, had only become more tyrannical towards their bristly dependents.

About this time, the ancient custom of seating the inhabitants in the meeting-house, according to their supposed rank, appears to have ceased. The last record which I can find, of a committee for the purpose, was in Oct. 17, 1785, when Josiah Ober, Lieut. Baker, and Richard Friend, were appointed to that office. A considerable part of the house was already occupied by pews which were owned by individuals. The influence of the Revolution was affecting, quite perceptibly, the manners and habits of the people, and this, with many other social distinctions of our fathers, rapidly died

away before the popular and democratic principle of the equality of all mankind.\*

Another institution which was gradually destroyed by the spirit of freedom, was the practice of holding negro slaves. This practice, though it seems never to have prevailed to any great extent, was introduced into the colony at quite an early date. I find recorded, as long ago as 1738, an "intent of marriage between Sharp, a negro servant of Samuel Gott, and Deborah, negro servant of Joseph Herrick, of Topsfield." In 1756, a vote was passed to lengthen the negro seat at the west end of the meeting-house. Tyler Porter's servant, Pomp, is repeatedly mentioned in the records. During the Revolution he did service as a soldier. In 1783, he was hired of his master, to do the work of a sexton,† and many persons still remember his jovial face and merry stories.

During Washington's administration there were many complaints that the treaty of 1783, with Great Britain, had not been properly observed. There was still a strong feeling of hostility towards

\* I have since found a record of the choice of a committee of three, for this purpose, as late as 1795. Their names were Richard Dodge, Richard Hood and Isaac Porter.

† When informed that he was entitled to his freedom, by a law of the State, and was at liberty to go when and where he pleased, he replied quite indignantly, "I will not go a step: I have worked hard to help earn this property, and I am determined to remain and help spend it." He expressed, not long before his death, the singular wish that his body might be disinterred after its decay, and the skeleton being wired together, might be suspended in that part of the attic in which he used to sleep, for the observation of future generations. He outlived his first and second master, and finally died in 1833, in the service of Dr. John Porter, at the advanced age of nearly ninety years.

England, and it was so much embittered by the refusal to deliver up some posts specified in the treaty, and by subsequent injuries that the two countries were again upon the verge of war. The town, in these circumstances, voted a bounty of \$12 to every man who would enlist in the United States Army, in addition to what he should receive from the government. These troubles were fortunately appeased by a treaty with England, negotiated by Mr. Jay, in 1795. It was not altogether satisfactory, but was approved by the constitutional majority of the Senate and by the President. Many cities and towns passed resolutions condemning it severely. It was, however, unanimously supported by the people of Wenham, not as being all that they desired, but as vastly preferable to a war. Time has vindicated the wisdom of their decision. The same year the town voted in favor of revising the Constitution of the State.

For many years the alewife fishery upon Miles' river, was a matter of considerable importance, and many meetings were held for the purpose of removing obstructions to the ascent of the fish, and of regulating the mode of catching them. A committee was first appointed for this object, in 1798, and was afterwards chosen annually, for many years. Two years later, it was voted, that these fish should only be caught with a seine, and on three days of the week, viz., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, on penalty of \$50, one-half to be paid

to the town, and the other to go to the informant. A special resolve was passed against fishing on the Sabbath.

In 1805, the dysentery was unusually prevalent and fatal, so that, in five weeks, from September 15th to October 20th, eleven persons died of it, nine of them being children.

In 1806, "the privilege of ringing the bell and sweeping the meeting-house for one year ensuing," was let out to Jonas Cook, for \$6,75. The collection of taxes in the east ward of the town, was taken by John Hooker, at \$1,18 on the \$100; in the west ward it was taken by Caleb Kimball, at \$1,49 for the same sum.

Dec. 22, 1807, the embargo was passed, which was repealed two years after, and the non-intercourse act substituted in its stead. These acts bore very heavily upon the people of New England, a large part of whom subsisted by commerce. In consequence of the distress thus occasioned, the Rev. Mr. Anderson addressed a letter to the town, remitting \$50 a year, of his salary, one-half to the town, and half to individuals who were in need, or had suffered during the year, from sickness. For this act of delicate consideration the thanks of the town were publicly voted to Mr. Anderson.

Political excitement run very high during this period, as is shown by the frequent meetings, and large votes which were cast. The Federal party

was uniformly and largely predominant, and the measures of Congress, particularly the embargo and the war with England, were bitterly censured. A strong address upon the subject was adopted by the State Legislature, and formally approved by the town. July 8, 1812, Hon. Timothy Pickering was chosen to attend a convention at Ipswich, "for the purpose of consulting upon the present awful and alarming situation of our country, on account of the war declared by Congress against Great Britain, and of adopting all constitutional measures for the restoration of peace and free commerce, on which the well-being of the commonwealth essentially depends." Dr. Daniel Kilham, a resident of the town, was, for many years, an active and zealous politician of the Republican party, while the Hon. Timothy Pickering was equally active on the side of the Federalists. They often used to meet and sometimes held warm discussions upon public affairs. On one occasion, they commenced a debate respecting the war, after the close of the morning session of the annual town meeting, and continued it so earnestly as to forget their dinners and everything else. The by-standers became so much interested that the afternoon session of the town meeting was given up, and the discussion continued till evening. Both parties were earnest and well-informed, and it must be acknowledged that there were really two sides to the questions discussed. As usually happens in such



cases, neither party was able to convince the other, but the majority of those present, perhaps, from previous prejudices and opinions, sided with Mr. Pickering. In the evening his friends took him to the public house, and gave him a supper, at which he made a speech of more than an hour, vigorously denouncing Congress and its favorite measures.

But, although the people of Wenham did not approve of the war, yet as long as the country was engaged in it, they did their part as faithful and patriotic citizens. Many of them engaged in those privateering enterprises which were carried on so extensively by the people of Essex county, and which contributed so much to annoy and injure the commerce of the enemy. Others enlisted in the United States armies, and fought bravely in those hard-contested battles, which marked that short but severe struggle. The town even voted, July 29, 1814, to hire men to enlist in the United States service, and appointed a committee for the purpose. That the burdens of the war were severely felt, appears from the smallness of the appropriations for schools, highways, &c., during this period. Rev. Mr. Anderson voluntarily relinquished \$100 out of a salary of \$500, during the continuance of the war.

As Essex county was much exposed to assaults from the blockading squadrons of the British, especial provisions were made to resist any attack.



Col. Porter, of Wenham, then commanded the Ipswich regiment. Being asked by the General of his Brigade how soon he could get his men under arms if they were called for, he replied, in four hours. The General would not believe this possible, but soon after an alarm came that the enemy had landed; for the moment, of course, all was disorder and confusion; but speedily every man seized his weapons, bade adieu to his wife and little ones, and within an hour the Wenham company was ready to march for Salem, only one man being absent. News soon arrived that the alarm was false, and the soldiers were at once dismissed. The spirit showed upon this occasion proved that the fires of the Revolution were not yet wholly extinguished. Soon after this, intelligence was received that the war was closed by the treaty of Ghent, and nowhere was peace more welcome than to the inhabitants of Wenham. Commerce again revived, manufactures continued to flourish, and the country resumed its career of unexampled growth and prosperity.

In 1820, the question of revising the Constitution of the State, was agitated. It was opposed by the people of Wenham, but being supported by a majority of voters in the State, John T. Dodge, Esq., was chosen as a delegate to the convention held in the State House for this purpose. Most of the changes proposed by this convention were subsequently approved by the town, although sev-

eral of them were passed by a close vote. The same year the town voted to accept a donation of \$500 from Mr. Edmund Kimball, of Newburyport, a native of Wenham, for the purpose of aiding in the support of the gospel ministry, as the best means of promoting the present and future happiness of mankind, and the thanks of the town were officially returned to Mr. Kimball for his liberal and generous offer.

About this time the subject of temperance began to occupy the minds of the people, and the old drinking usages of society were gradually done away. For several years, this was an exciting question in town affairs. At length, in 1825, a vote was obtained, that it was inexpedient that any licenses should be granted for the sale of ardent spirits for that year, and similar votes were passed in several succeeding years. In 1842, a ye and nay vote was taken as to the propriety and expediency of allowing the sale of intoxicating liquors, within the limits of the town, which resulted in three affirmative and fifty-four negative votes. A Temperance Society was formed, pledging first, abstinence from distilled liquors, and afterwards from everything that could intoxicate. For many years intemperance was rare, but of late, it seems to be again on the increase. The same year, the town voted to grant to the first parish in Salem, the privilege of erecting a monument to Hugh Peters, once pastor of that church, on condition that it

should be done within three years. As the offer was not accepted within that time, the town sold its interest to Charles B. Lander, for the ice business.

A portion of the surplus revenue of the United States being distributed to the town, in 1837, it was deposited with certain trustees, for three years, after which it was divided among the several districts, to aid in erecting and repairing school-houses. A committee from neighboring towns, viz., Elias Putnam, of Danvers, J. Safford, of Beverly, and Francis Burnham, of Essex, was appointed to divide the money among the districts. At the same time, 1840, the extreme east part of the town, which had hitherto been an appendage of the Neck, was formed into a separate district. The privilege of setting their new school-house upon the common, was granted to the centre district for fifty years, with the right of passing to and from the same.

A piece of land, amounting to about four acres, had been purchased by the town, for a parsonage, as long ago as 1725, and had been occupied by the successive ministers of the town. A vote was passed, empowering a committee, with the consent of the pastor of the Congregational Society, to sell this land, which was situated on the north side of the road to the Neck, where it turns off from the main county road, and to appropriate the proceeds for the use of the Society. The money thus re-

ceived, with other funds and contributions, was invested in a parsonage.

The want of a hall for public meetings, lectures, &c., had long been seriously felt by the people of Wenham. Town meetings had been held, first in the meeting-house, and then in the vestry, but it was felt that the former was not a suitable place, and the latter was too small to accommodate all who wished to attend. At length, in 1854, a vote was passed by seventy-nine yeas to sixty-one nays, to erect such a building, and Messrs. John Porter, C. A. Kilham, A. Dodge, F. Hadley, J. Cook, B. C. Putnam, and M. Mildram, were appointed a committee "to erect a Town House, such, as in their judgment, the convenience, interests and wants of the town require, at an expense not exceeding \$5,000." Thus authorized, the committee proceeded to fill up a pond hole, which had long defaced the common, and to erect upon the spot a building thirty-eight feet wide by fifty-four feet long on the outside of the frame, with a projection on the front, sixteen feet by twenty-five. It is two stories in height, besides a large and convenient basement. On the first floor is a large and convenient school-room, with a recitation-room, dressing-room, and a room for the meetings of the selectmen. The second story is occupied by the Town Hall, with a small ante-room in the projection. The entire building is surmounted by a cupola, which affords an extensive and beautiful view of the surrounding

country. The hall is furnished with settees, and will seat three hundred and fifty to four hundred persons. This building is an ornament to the town. The convenience of its interior arrangements, and the neatness and even elegance which marks every part, are highly creditable to the committee under whose superintendence it was built, as well as the architect who planned it, and the mechanics by whom the work was performed. On the whole, it is one of the finest and most convenient buildings for town purposes, in this part of the State.

We close our review of the history of the town by giving a brief summary of its present condition. The population of Wenham, though never large, has of late years been gradually increasing, and is now supposed to number not far from eleven hundred persons. It is impossible to estimate with much accuracy, the number of inhabitants during the early periods of the history of the town. At the time of its incorporation in 1643, it may have been 150. In consequence of a part of the colony removing to Chelmsford, the population had probably increased but little at the settlement of Mr. Gerrish, in 1673. At his death, Jan. 6, 1720, there were said to be more than three times as many families in the place as at his ordination. The number of polls recorded in 1733, was 122; in 1750, it was 110; 1760, 128; 1779, 118. From these data we may conclude that the population of

the town did not vary much from 500. In 1810, the census was 554; in 1820, 572; in 1830, 612; in 1840, 693; in 1850, 977; in 1855, 1073. According to the census taken, June, 1857, the number of voters is 228.

The people of Wenham are occupied principally with agriculture and the manufacture of boots and shoes. In 1855, one hundred and twenty acres were planted with Indian corn, yielding, it is estimated, thirty bushels to the acre, and worth \$3,600. Thirty-three acres were sown with various English grains, and producing crops valued at \$1,040. There were seven hundred and eighty acres of English mowing, bearing five hundred and fifty-five tons of hay, worth \$10,530, besides two hundred and twenty-six acres of meadow, yielding 286 tons, valued at \$2,288. Of fruit, there were five thousand three hundred apple trees, worth \$5,250, and three hundred pear trees, worth \$275. There were also twenty acres of cranberry meadow, valued at \$750; fifty-six acres were planted with potatoes, the crop of which was valued at \$5,936. Of butter, 14,655 pounds were made, worth \$3,663,75. Of milk, sold from the town, and of the value of vegetables, for marketing, &c., raised here, no estimate was made.

Of live stock, there were three hundred and fifteen horses, worth \$8,750; oxen and steers, seventy-six, worth \$3,750; milch cows, two hundred and twenty-six; heifers, fourteen, worth together,



\$7,500. Of sheep, there were thirty, producing seventy-five pounds of wool, and worth \$100. It is manifest that many of the previous estimates are very low, and fail to give an adequate idea of the agricultural resources of the town. If, to the previous sums, we add the value of fire-wood prepared for market, six hundred and fifteen cords, worth \$3,000, we shall make the value of the aggregate productive industry from these sources, \$27,058.

The value of wagons, sleighs, and other vehicles made in town during that year, was estimated at \$4,250. Of shoes, made for dealers in Danvers, and Lynn, there were two hundred and five cases; value of work, \$36,560; number of men employed, one hundred and sixty. Besides these, four thousand two hundred pairs of boots, and twenty-five thousand pairs of shoes were manufactured at an estimated value of \$20,000, and employing forty-six males and twenty females. The ice establishment cuts annually about twenty-five thousand tons of ice, valued at \$40,000. Of blacksmiths' shops, there are two, doing a business, valued at \$2,500 per year. There are also two stores, the annual business of which may be estimated at \$35,000.

These statistics, taken from the official report of the census for 1855, may not attain to absolute accuracy, yet they show, somewhere near, the productive industry of the place, and may be worth preserving for reference in future years.



The following is a list of the representatives from this town, to the General Court, from 1643 to 1857.

Joseph Batchelder, 1644; Mr. Sparrowhawk, 1645; Mr. Auditor, 1646; William Fisk, 1647-'49-'50-'52; Esdras Reade, 1648-'50; Phineas Fisk, 1653; Charles Gott, 1654-'66; John Fisk, 1669-'81; Thomas Fisk, 1671-'72-'78-'79-'80-'86-'94-'97; Walter Fairfield, 1692-1700; John Newman, 1698-'99; William Fisk, 1701-'04-'11-'13-'14; Thomas Patch, 1703-'07; John Porter, 1712-'24-'26; Thomas Fisk, Jr., 1715; William Rogers, 1717-'18-'19-'25-'30; John Gott, 1720; William Fairfield, 1723-'28-'30-'32-'33-'34-'35-'36-'37-'38-'39-'40-'41; Samuel Kimball, 1729; Jonathan Porter, 1745-'46-'47; John Dodge, 1755; Benjamin Fairfield, 1767-'74-'75-'76; Billy Porter, 1791-'92; Samuel Blanchard, 1797-'98-'99-1803-1808 unanimous-'09-'10; John Dodge, '11-'12-'13; P. Porter, 1815-'16-'17-'18-'28-'29-'30; Moses Foster, 1833-'36-'37; John Porter, 1834-'35-'50; Benjamin Edwards, 1838; Andrew Dodge, 1839-'40; Franklin Hadley, 1841; Joseph Cook, 1842; Edmund Kimball, 1846; Amos Gould, 1848; Moses Mildram, 1851; Benjamin C. Putnam, 1853; Orin Mildram, 1854.

By a recent change in the Constitution of the State, Wenham, as a town, no longer sends a representative. It is now united with Beverly and Topsfield, into one district, which has the right of sending two representatives annually, to the General Court.

The following is a list of the Moderators of the annual town meeting, since 1700, previous to which, the Moderator's name is not usually given.

Thomas Fisk, 1700-'04-'05; William Fisk, 1702-'03-'12-'13-'14; Walter Fairfield, 1706-'07-'08-'09; Thomas

Fisk, Jr., 1710 - '11 - '20; William Fairfield, 1715 - '16 - '33 - '34 - '35 - '36 - '39 - '41; John Gott, 1717 - '18 - '19; John Porter, 1723 - '24 - '27 - '28 - '29; Ephraim Kimball, 1725; Samuel Kimball, 1733 - '38 - '40 - '42 - '43; John Dodge, 1744; Jona. Kimball, 1745 - '47 - '48 - '49 - '50 - '51 - '53 - '54 - '56 - '57 - '58, Samuel Gott, 1745; Samuel Rogers, 1752; Jona. Porter, 1755; Nathaniel Brown, 1758 - '59 - '60 - '63 - '68 - '69 - '70 - '71 - '72; Benjamin Kimball, 1761 - '66; Josiah Fairfield, 1762 - '64 - '65 - '73 - '74 - '77; Josiah Herrick, 1767; John Friend, 1775 - '76 - '78 - '79 - '81 - '84; Samuel Tarbox, 1780 - '82 - '83; Pelatiah Brown, 1785 - '86 - '93 - '98 - 1802; John Dodge, 1787 - '88 - '90 - 91 - '94; Tyler Porter, 1792 - '95 - '96 - '97 - '99 - 1803 - '04; Stephen Dodge, 1789; Samuel Blanchard, 1800 - '01 - '05 - '06 - '07 - '09 - '10 - '11 - '12 - '13; Timothy Pickering, 1808; John T. Dodge, 1814 - '15 - '17 - 18 - '19 - '20, Isaac Dodge, 1816; Paul Porter, 1821 - '22 - '23 - 24 - '25 - '26 - '27 - '28 - '29 - '37 - '38 - '39 - '40; Andrew Dodge, 1830 - '31 - '32 - '33 - '34 - '35 - '36 - '41 - '42 - '43 - '44 - '45 - '46 - '47 - '48 - '49 - '50 - '51 - '52 - '53 - '55 - 56; Rufus A. Dodge, 1854 - '59; Benjamin C. Putnam, 1857; S. Porter, 1859.

The following persons have held the place of Town Clerk since its incorporation in 1643.

William Fisk, 1643 - '60; Thomas Fisk, 1661 - '94; John Newman, 1695 - '96 - '97 - '98 - '99 - 1700 - 01; Thomas Fisk, Jr., 1702 - '03 - '05 - '05; William Fairfield, 1706 - '07 - '08 - '09 - '10 - '11 - '24 - '25 - '26 - '27 - '28 - '29; William Rogers, 1712 - '13 - '14 - '15 - '16 - '17 - '18 - '19 - '20 - '21 - '22 - '23 - '31 - '32 - '33 - '34 - '35; Nathaniel Brown, 1737 - '39 - '40 - '41; John Gott, 1738; David Batchelder, 1742 - '43 - '44 - '45 - '46 - '47; Jonathan Kimball, Jr., 1748 - '49 - '50 - '51 - '52 - '53 - '59 - '60 - '61 - '62 - '63; Samuel Goodrich, 1754 - '55 - '56 - '57 - '58; Edward Waldron, 1764 - '65 - '66 - '67 - '68 - '69 - '70; William Fairfield, 1771 - '72; Tyler Porter, 1773 - '74 - '75 - '77 - '81 - '82 - '83; John Orme, 1776; Richard Dodge, 1778 -

'79 - '80 - '89 - '90; Stephen Dodge, 1784 - '85 - '86 - '87 - '91 - '92; John Dodge, Jr., 1793 - '94 - '95 - '96 - '97 - '98 - 1808 - '09; Joseph Fairfield, 1799 - 1800 - '01 - '02 - '03 - '04 - 05 - '06 - '07; Paul Porter, 1809 - '10 - '11 - '12 - '13 - '14 - '15 - '16 - '17 - '18; John T. Dodge, Jr., 1819 - '20 - '21 - '22; Moses Foster, 1823 - '24 - '25 - '26 - '27 - '28 - '29 - '32 - '33 - '34 - 35 - '36 - '37 - '38 - '39; David Starrett, 1830 - '31; John Porter, 1840 - '41 - '42 - '43 - '44 - '45 - '46 - '47 - '48; Stephen Dodge, 1849 - '50 - '51; John A. Putnam, 1852 - '53 - '54 - '55 - 56; Benjamin C. Putnam, 1857 - '58 - '59.

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## PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF WENHAM.

THE first settlers of New England were fully sensible of the necessity of education. Many of their number were men of high attainments, and they early took measures to provide for their children and successors, advantages like those they had themselves enjoyed. Harvard College was established within six years of the settlement of Boston, and all the towns in the colony were speedily called upon to contribute to its support.

But the fathers of New England were not contented with providing for the education merely of the few, who were required for the different professions, or for the service of the State. They ventured upon what was then a novel, and, as it was generally considered, a hazardous experiment. They aimed to make education universal. At the present time, when we see its fortunate results, we can hardly estimate the boldness of this undertak-

ing. Scarcely had they built houses to cover their heads, and planted corn enough to supply the immediate necessities of nature, when they proceeded to make provision for the training of their children and youth. In 1642, the Legislature passed an act, that "the selectmen of every town, appointed for managing the prudential affairs of the same, should take accompt of the parents and masters of their children, concerning the calling and the implement of their children, especially of their ability to read and understand the principles of religion and the capital laws of the country." They were also required to see that the young were brought up to some trade or useful occupation; and all parents who should fail in these first duties to their offspring, might be deprived of their children, who should be apprenticed to others.

The kind of education contemplated in this act was to be given at home, by parents and masters. In many parts of the province, schools were scarce and remote. Children, if they attended at all, were obliged to travel three or four miles, and that perhaps, in an unfavorable season of the year. In religious things the clergy were active in imparting instruction, and often assembled and catechised the children. Moreover, in their frequent pastoral visitations, they did not neglect the lambs of their flock. Many of them had acted as teachers before ordination, and it was not uncommon for them to combine secular with religious instruction, after they became pastors.

The act of 1642 required that all should be educated, but did not provide the means for effecting it. In 1647, therefore, it was further enacted, that, "It being one chief project of the old deluder Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, and that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers, in the church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors; it is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased it to the number of fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their town to teach all such children as shall resort to them, to write and read." The penalty for disobeying this act was £5, but was afterwards raised to £10; in 1683, to £20, and in 1718, to £30. This act is regarded as laying the foundation of the Massachusetts common school system.

For many years after Wenham was settled, the immediate necessities of their new situation seem to have occupied all the thoughts and energies of the inhabitants. It was some time before the number of householders increased so as to bring them within the provisions of the last-quoted statute. The early period of the history of the town was evidently a time of much privation. It was only with extreme difficulty that the people were able to meet the expenses of government and the support of the gospel. We find no reference to any school till the close of the seventeenth century, or

more than sixty years after the place was settled. Yet the inhabitants somehow contrived to obtain a considerable degree of education. The early records are marked by good sense and general correctness. The hand-writing, though sometimes obscure and often defaced by time, is creditable, and some of it really elegant. The signatures of the various deeds and contracts are usually in the writing of the subscribers. In one instance, where the signatures of forty-six of the commoners are given, only ten of the number were under the necessity of making their mark.

The style of these old documents is quaint and the spelling strange to our eyes. But it must be remembered that the English language at that time was not fully formed. The grammar and orthography of that age differed considerably from ours. The same peculiarities of spelling and in the use of words, are found in the works of the best writers and scholars of those times. When these considerations are kept in mind, the perusal of the old records of the town cannot fail to give a very favorable impression of the intelligence and good sense of those who wrote them.

During the half century and more, that preceded the establishment of schools, children must have obtained their education mostly at home. Parents felt it as much their duty to instruct their children in the elements of learning as to teach them the means of gaining a livelihood. Books in those



days were few and costly, while newspapers and the whole tribe of periodicals were wholly wanting. But they all had one Book which they had learned to love and reverence, and which they assiduously taught to their children. Not unlikely many of those whom we regard as rude and ignorant, would far exceed their more favored descendants in familiarity with the Scriptures! They had no lack of men competent for the service of the Church and the State. And when we remember that the foundations of our free institutions were laid, and the elements of all our subsequent prosperity and progress were developed and applied by the men of that generation, we must give them no small credit for liberal and enlightened views, as well as for practical wisdom. In this point of view, home education, when well performed, appears to have been a very good thing after all.

But in process of time Wenham increased and prospered, but still without a public school, till at last, in 1700, a complaint was made to the Court, against the town. The matter, of course, could not any longer be neglected. Two men were immediately appointed "to answer such presentment, on the town's behalf." Meanwhile a school was at once established. Sept. 9, 1700, we find the following record: "At a meeting of the selectmen, Capt. Thomas Fisk was appointed to keep a school in town, for the year ensuing, for the learning of children and youth to read and write; and he be



allowed by the town, his proportion of rates to county and town, for the year ensuing, from this time, besides what he shall have of those that he shall so learn to read and write." This action of the selectmen was confirmed by the town, in November of the same year, and it was further voted, that "if what the scholars shall pay for their learning shall not be sufficient satisfaction for the master that shall keep such school, the selectmen are empowered to make such further satisfaction to said schoolmaster, as in equity and justice shall be convenient."

Thus meagre is the only account that can now be obtained of the first school in Wenham. It was probably kept at the house of the teacher, or, possibly, as was often customary, in the meeting-house. Of the length of time it was kept, or of the number of its scholars, we have no means of information. The old records, however, throw some light upon the character of the teacher. Nearly thirty years before he had been chosen to represent the town in the Legislature, and had been repeatedly re-elected to the same position. He had been, for more than twenty years, captain in "the trainband," no insignificant post in those days, and had been more concerned in town business than any other living inhabitant. At this time he must have been the patriarch of the place, and it shows conclusively, the high estimation in which education was held, when such a man was appoint-

ed schoolmaster. He seems to have continued in charge of the school for several years, "receiving reasonable satisfaction for his pains," and, we doubt not, from the intelligence and good sense of the men trained under him, that he was a faithful and successful teacher. Wenham has certainly no reason to be ashamed of its first schoolmaster.

Capt. Fisk was succeeded as teacher by William Rogers, who also subsequently attained to the dignity of captain, was actively employed in town affairs, and appears to have enjoyed the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens. For many years he officiated as town clerk, and the neatness of his penmanship as well as the correctness of the records, speak well for the faithfulness and general ability of their author.

It is difficult to say what wages were paid for teaching in those days. From occasional notices it appears that the scholars used each to pay about sixpence a term; besides which the selectmen used to allow what they called "reasonable satisfaction." In 1713, an agreement was made with Wm. Rogers, "to keep school in our town, to teach the youth to read and write, and to sweep the meeting-house, and ring the bell for the year, and we do allow him 55s. for his allowance."

There seems to have been but one school in town till 1719, when, besides the one taught by Mr. Rogers, arrangements were made for a second, under Mr. Daniel Dodge, and these two men con-

tinued to officiate as teachers for several subsequent years. Mr. Dodge was, for many years, one of the most prominent and respected citizens of the place, and extensively engaged in town affairs. In 1729, he was chosen one of the deacons of the church, which place he filled acceptably till his death. The name of Nathaniel Rogers occurs as teacher, first in 1726. In 1733, he was made a kind of educator-general for the town. An agreement was made with him by the selectmen, "to keep a writing and reading school for the year ensuing; and whereas it is impracticable for all the children to come together in one place, it is covenanted and agreed that he be allowed to teach little children to read by suitable women, in the several parts of the town, that he shall agree with, by the approbation of the selectmen; also to teach to write by another man, in another part of the town." This is the earliest account of the employment of females in the business of education.

In 1734, it was voted by the town, that our present Representative, Mr. William Fairfield, "be directed and empowered to present a petition to the General Court, for a grant of some land belonging to the province, to enable the town better to support a school." It was a frequent practice for the Legislature in those times to make grants of land for the establishment of institutions of a higher grade than common schools. Many academies, in which young men were fitted for college, and

others instructed in the higher branches of an English education, were founded in this way. It was probably in reference to an institution of this kind that the present petition was offered, for the town already had two or three common schools, and had no difficulty in supporting them. Had the grant been obtained and such a school been established, there is no estimating the good effects it must have produced, not only on Wenham, but on the towns around.

In 1739, it was voted to raise £30 for supporting the public schools. This was the first appropriation by the town, for the purpose, and when compared with what was paid a few years before, it appears quite liberal; but it must be remembered that the currency was somewhat depreciated.

The sphere of public instruction was enlarged in 1742, so as to include "cyphering," in addition to the branches taught, as appears from the record of an agreement with Mr. Jonathan Perkins, Nov. 30, 1742, "to keep a school in our town, to teach our children to read, write and cypher, six months from date." Arithmetic has ever since maintained its place in our public schools. The following is a specimen of the certificates given in those times, to teachers. "Jan. 14, 1743. Mr. Jonathan Perkins having been agreed with to keep a school in our town for six months, we being well satisfied of his ability for that service, and his sober and good conversation, do approbate the said Jonathan Perkins

to keep a school in our town, for the time agreed on, he *continuing* in such conversation." Remembering the influence which the teacher must always exert over the morals as well as the minds of his pupils, they were anxious to secure one who should teach by the correctness of his example as well as by precept.

The care of the schools was left mostly to the selectmen. They hired the teacher and determined the length of the school, and the place where it should be kept. It was not till 1772, that a committee was appointed, especially to take charge of the schools, nor was it done habitually, till considerably later. The wages paid to teachers varied very much with the state of the currency, but it was generally worth from \$4 to \$8 a month, beside board.

In 1746, Mrs. Elizabeth Kimball was "approved of and approbated to keep school in our town, to teach children and youth to read and write, she having behaved in sober conversation." This appears to have been the first instance in which a female teacher was employed by the town.

Three different schools continued to be supported in different sections of the town, and separate teachers employed for them, until the year 1770, when it was voted, that "a grammar school be constantly kept in this town, the year ensuing, and that provision be made for the support of the same." It was moreover voted "that a committee

be chosen to provide a schoolmaster, and to apportion said school, according to the tax in this town." This school, which seems to have been removed from district to district, as occasion required, was continued for several years. In 1779, it was taught by Rev. Mr. Swain, in addition to his pulpit and pastoral labors. For this service he received, in the depreciated currency of the times, £300, which might have been worth \$50. In 1780, £1,500 were raised for the support of schools; but when we remember that £75 of this "continental paper" was worth only £1 of hard money, this sum will not appear so extravagant. The old system of having three schools, and dividing the money for them equally among the districts, was resumed in 1782. After the Revolution, the amount of school money raised for many years, was £30, or \$100 annually. In 1798, it was \$200; in 1812, \$250; in 1828, \$300; in 1838, it was further increased to \$400. Besides these appropriations, \$10 to \$20 were annually raised for supporting a school in the extreme east part of the town, the children of which had also the privilege of attendance at the Neck. Since 1840, this section of the town has been formed into a new district, and received its share with the rest, in all the appropriations of the town.

In 1806, a vote was passed "that the selectmen and the committee, chosen in each school ward for procuring schoolmasters for the time being, shall



be a committee for the purpose of visiting schools with Rev. R. Anderson, for the better management of schools agreeable to law." Since 1817, the general superintendence of the schools has been entrusted to a committee annually chosen by the town for the purpose. This committee were instructed in 1822, to prepare a series of rules "for the better examining and governing the several schools. These rules were approved in town meeting, and entered at length upon the records. They specify the studies taught in the schools, viz.: reading, spelling, defining, writing, grammar, arithmetic, and geography, and prescribe the mode of examination in each. Much importance is also attached to moral and religious instruction, to regular and punctual attendance, and to training in good manners. The school committee were instructed in 1851, to prepare and cause to be printed for general distribution, a summary of the laws of the State respecting education, and also such particular rules as they judged essential for the benefit of the schools in town. These regulations were approved by the town, and have since continued to constitute the school code.

The annual reports of the school committee have, for many years, been of great utility, in keeping before the people, the condition and wants of our public schools, and thus exciting and maintaining a general interest in the cause of education. They also furnish a body of useful information re-



specting the history and state of the schools at various periods. Had we a series of such reports, extending back to the settlement of the town, we could hardly estimate their value and interest. But unfortunately the history of our public schools has to be made up from the detached hints and brief notices, which happen to be preserved in the early records.

By the returns of the year 1859, it appears that the number of children within the town, between the ages of five and fifteen years, was two hundred and thirty. The total number of pupils in the summer schools, was one hundred and fifty-eight; in the winter schools, two hundred and thirty, the average attendance for the year, being one hundred and sixty. The present year, 1859-'60 \$800 have been appropriated by the town, for public education, besides \$48 received from the State school fund. The course of instruction has also been considerably lengthened by private schools, which have been taught in some of the districts.

The school-houses of the town, five in number, were built before public attention was directed, as it has recently been, to the improved construction of these buildings. They have, however, been repaired, and are well arranged and in a good condition.

Massachusetts has always regarded her system of public and universal education with peculiar favor. Commenced in the infancy of the State,

and ever nourished with assiduous care, it has acquired, and is likely to retain a strong hold upon the hearts of the people. Its object is to provide for all, the means of obtaining an education sufficient to make them useful, intelligent, and respectable citizens. But this end can only be obtained by constant care and vigilance. Laws, and school-committees, and even teachers, can accomplish but little without the aid and co-operation of parents and guardians. The intellectual as well as the moral character of the child is mainly determined by home influences. If stimulated and encouraged by parents and friends to improve every opportunity for acquiring useful knowledge, children will seldom fail to make progress at school. But if they meet with only coldness and indifference at home, the best teachers and the best instruction will accomplish but little. In no other way can the present exert so direct and so efficient an influence in shaping and moulding the character of future generations, as in the education of children and youth. From our public schools are to come forth the men who must soon occupy the prominent positions of social and public life, and carry on the machinery of the world. What shall be the future character of the people of Wenham, for enterprize, intelligence and morality, depends mainly upon the influences exerted in the education of the rising generation. In view of these things, let every parent, every patriot, and every good citizen

take a deep and lively interest in the prosperity of our public schools. Let them provide neat and comfortable school-houses, as well as competent and faithful teachers; let them visit and inspect the school in which their children are laying the foundation for an immortal future. The old monks had a method of erasing ancient writings from parchment, and substituting others as they chose. But no art, no device, can wholly erase from the mind of the child the characters early impressed upon it.

The town of Wenham once had a public library, which no doubt had considerable influence in diffusing information and a taste for reading, among the people. Like other libraries, however, its volumes became old and worn, and as no funds were provided for obtaining new works, its contents became scattered and much reduced, and what few remained were finally disposed of. Within a few months an association has been formed for the purpose of purchasing new and standard works, as they may issue from the press. A small but select library has thus been formed, of about one hundred volumes, which we trust may yet be the nucleus of a large and valuable collection.

We know of no way in which a liberal, patriotic and philanthropic citizen could do more for his native town, than in making a donation for, we will not say a large, but a select and well-chosen library. Wenham has several sons who might do this, and

thus lay the people of the town under lasting obligations, without their feeling the slightest inconvenience from what they had given. Danvers has been nobly endowed by the princely generosity of one of its sons, and Beverly, yet more recently, has procured an excellent library by subscription among its citizens. We do not anticipate so great things for Wenham, but we think that any one, who would give five hundred or even one hundred choice books, would be conferring a benefit of incalculable value on the place. In a town like this, there are often young men of active minds but limited advantages, to whom access to such a library would be worth more than its entire cost. Many a restless spirit might be saved from a career of vice, perhaps from ruin, disgrace and prison, by pre-occupying his mind with a taste for useful and instructive reading. An amount of intelligence and general information might thus be diffused through the community, such as can hardly be estimated. Will not some one be public-spirited enough to take the lead in this good cause, and thus secure the lasting gratitude of his fellow-citizens?

During several winters lyceums have been organized, and courses of lectures delivered by various distinguished writers and speakers. Within the last two years there has been a debating club, and thus far it has been well sustained. Every judicious enterprize of this kind is deserving of gen-

eral and cordial support. It was in institutions of this kind that many of the leading spirits of the present age received their first impulse and early training. They foster intellectual activity, and furnish the youthful mind with subjects for thought and motives for thinking. They also furnish during the long winter evenings, a source of amusement at once interesting and profitable. Such institutions, when properly conducted, often become a source of benefit, not only to those who are immediately engaged in them, but also to the community in which they exist.

The want of a higher education than is furnished by our common schools has been at times seriously felt by the people of Wenham. So long ago as 1810, the town voted to grant to "the subscribers, for an academy, the privilege of setting the same on the common, in said town, during their pleasure." The attempt, however, to establish this institution, appears to have been a failure, and those who were anxious to enjoy such advantages were compelled to resort to neighboring towns. Of late years a private school has been several times attempted in the vestry, but with much inconvenience from the want of a suitable room. To provide a suitable place for such a school, was an inducement to the erection of the present Town House. A large and convenient room was there fitted up, and furnished with the necessary apparatus for instruction. A school

was here opened, in 1854, by Mr. C. L. Edwards, a graduate of the Westfield Normal School. After remaining in Wenham, about a year, Mr. E. removed to Kansas, and his place was soon after assumed by Mr. Francis M. Dodge, a native of Wenham, and a graduate of Waterville College. Mr. Dodge continued his school for two years, and with a good degree of success. More recently the school-room has been engaged by the third district, [and occupied by the grammar school. During the intermissions of the latter, a school for instruction in the higher branches, has been kept most of the time. We hope for the interests of the town that an institution of this kind may yet be established and receive a liberal and permanent support. Our common schools are valuable and important, but they can never do the work of this school. Crowded as they usually are, their teachers can have but little time to impart instruction in the higher branches of study, without neglecting the younger pupils. In such a town as this, there is always a sufficient number of young people, with those who will come from adjoining towns, to support such a school generously, and the influence of such an institution in promoting intelligence, and improving the character of our people, and in making Wenham a desirable place of residence to families from abroad, can hardly be estimated. The character of our common schools will always be found to rise or fall according to the state of the schools above



them. There is no surer mode of diffusing intelligence among the masses, than to provide and support the higher institutions of learning.

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## FIRE DEPARTMENT.

THE first provision for extinguishing fires was made by a vote of the town, in 1821, "That the selectmen procure six ladders and three fire-hooks, for the use of the town, to be equally divided among the three separate districts. In 1835, a fire company of twenty-five members was organized, of which Franklin Hadley was chosen foreman, and Rufus A. Dodge secretary and treasurer. The same year the town voted to raise \$100 to build an engine house and to procure the necessary apparatus. An engine costing \$200, was purchased by subscription. This company continued in efficient operation for several years, but was at length disbanded, and the engine sold.

In 1849, the fire department was re-organized and established on a new and efficient basis. A new engine was purchased, towards which the sum of \$900 was furnished by the town. A new and convenient engine house was also erected, and all the apparatus essential for the successful operation of the machine, was procured. The company, which at first contained forty-eight members, was organized by the choice of B. C. Putnam, foreman, and J. H.



Felt, treasurer and clerk. It has since been continued in successful operation, and on one occasion has been the means of preventing what might have proved a serious fire. It has always enlisted the sympathies and good will of the citizens in general, and of the ladies in particular. By the latter, an elegant banner was presented to the company, Sept. 25, 1850, which was received and acknowledged in an appropriate address by the foreman. The company then repaired to the lake, and with their friends and invited guests partook of a bountiful collation provided for the occasion. On the same day a silver trumpet was presented by the company, as a token of their confidence in the skill and fidelity of their gallant foreman, Mr. B. C. Putnam. Every thing passed off pleasantly and to the satisfaction of all concerned, showing that firemen may be honorable and high-minded gentlemen, and not the mere machines, nor the factious and quarrelsome rowdies, which they are sometimes considered.

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## PROFESSIONS.

I AM not aware that Wenham has ever been honored by being the residence of a practising lawyer. The inhabitants have always been of a peaceful character, and lawsuits have been seldom known among them.

The history of the medical profession is almost

as soon told. Rev. John Fisk, the first minister, had been educated as a physician, and was thus capable of attending to the wants at once of the body and the soul. After his departure, the town remained for more than a century without a physician, being supplied from the adjoining towns. About the year 1763, the name of Dr. Isaac Spofford appears among the residents of the place, but he seems to have soon left. Tyler Porter, Esq., was educated as a physician, and was for many years a citizen of the town, but, for some reason, never practised his profession. His son, Tyler Porter, Jr., studied medicine and settled in Newbury, but died much lamented, at the early age of twenty-six. Dr. Wm. Fairfield, son of Benj. Fairfield, and a native of Wenham, was a distinguished physician and surgeon in the French war. After the close of the war, he returned to his native town and resumed the practice of his profession. He lived on the place now occupied by Mr. Wm. Porter. His business soon increased so much and became so extensive in Beverly, and even Salem, that he at length removed to the latter city, where he became distinguished for his skill and success, and acquired a large and lucrative practice. He died of small pox, Oct. 10, 1773, at the age of forty-two. A highly complimentary notice of him appeared in the Essex Gazette\* of that date, which speaks in the highest terms of his proficiency, skill,

\* For the use of this paper I am indebted to Dr. John Porter, whose mother was a daughter of Dr. Fairfield.

and success in the medical art, and of the excellence of his private character. Obituary notices of this character were far more rare and significant in those days than they now are.

Dr. Barnard Tucker, was a son of the minister of Newbury. He graduated at Harvard College, in 1789, and afterwards practised several years in Beverly. Subsequently he removed to Wenham, and lived upon the place now occupied by Mr. Charles Brown. He was well versed in the French and Spanish languages, in which he was much employed as an instructor. His profession seems never to have engrossed very much of his time or attention.\* He had a kind heart, and was remarkable for gentleness of disposition, and simplicity of manners. Ultimately he removed to his native place, where he is supposed to have died.

In 1826, a vote was passed at a regular town meeting, that the selectmen be a committee to wait on Dr. Samuel Dodge, and invite him to settle among them as a physician and surgeon. This was certainly a high compliment to pay to one who was a native of the town, and well known to most of its inhabitants. In accordance with this request, Dr. Dodge soon after took up his residence in Wenham, where he practised his profession with general satisfaction, until his death, Oct. 30, 1833, at the age of forty-four.

\* A bill of his, charging 2s. 6d. for two professional visits to his mother, has been shown to me, by Col. Porter.

Soon after the death of Dr. Dodge, Dr. Nathan Jones commenced the practice of his profession in Wenham, where he remained until his removal to Beverly, in April, 1858.

The author of this history, a graduate of Yale College, of the class of 1852, and subsequently of the Pennsylvania Medical College at Philadelphia, commenced the practice of medicine in this town, July, 1855.

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## THE BURIAL GROUND.

THE small eminence lying near the main road from Wenham to Beverly, and a little to the north of the lake, was probably appropriated as a place of burial, at the first settlement of the town. Inscriptions on grave stones, erected as early as the beginning of the last century, can still be deciphered, while others, covered with moss and crumbling with age, belong to a period still more ancient. The number of deaths within the town, since its settlement, would probably exceed two thousand, or nearly twice its entire present population. A few of these have been buried in tombs or private grounds, and a considerable number from the east part of the town, have been carried to the grave-yard in Dodge's Row, a little south of the Beverly line. But much the larger portion have doubtless been buried in the ground we have just described.

No account has been preserved of the choice or dedication of the spot. As early as 1750, a committee was appointed "to settle the boundaries of the burial-place, with the neighboring proprietors, and in order hereunto, applied themselves to the town books for some record or grant made to the town, but could find none." An arrangement of the boundaries was accordingly made by a special committee, and the whole suitably enclosed. A piece of land adjoining the old ground, on its northerly side, was given to the town by the late Dea. Nathaniel Kimball, and here most of those who have recently died, have been buried. Every part of the older portion of the ground has been so taken up that scarcely a single spot can now be found unoccupied.

More recently, several acres have been purchased, upon the hill which lies east of the present burial-ground, and laid out in lots to suit the convenience of purchasers. When these grounds are fitted up and ornamented as we trust they will be, few country towns will have cemeteries more attractive than Wenham.

It is only within a few years that public attention has been directed to the subject of adorning the last resting-places of the dead. In former times, the grave-yard was often selected for its sterility, and worthlessness for every other purpose. Some barren and desolate spot was usually chosen, without a tree to shade it, or a flower to

adorn it, and where all surrounding objects were fitted to inspire only terror and gloom. Our ancestors in Wenham, whether from a better taste or by accident, were more fortunate in their selection, and though but little care has been taken for the arrangement and decoration of the grounds the locality and the objects by which it is surrounded are well suited to cherish that spirit of thoughtful and pensive meditation which we naturally feel in visiting the resting-places of the departed. The quiet stillness of the spot, the peaceful beauty of the neighboring fields and hills, with occasional glimpses of the tranquil lake, mirrored in soft repose, unite to make the spot almost the ideal of a rural burial-ground, as happily described by the poet :—

“How sweet the scene around me now,  
A little church-yard on the brow  
Of a green, pastoral hill ;  
Its sylvan village sleeps below,  
While faintly near is heard the flow  
Of the soft, summer’s rill ;  
A place where all things mournful meet,  
And yet the sweetest of the sweet,  
The stillest of the still.”

Among the points of particular interest, are the graves of the village pastors, five of whom lie buried in a row, near the centre of the ground, while two, Messrs. Newman and Gerrish, lie in another part of the yard. The monument over the grave



of Mr. Gerrish, is a large, horizontal slab of sandstone, placed on the spot by a vote of the town, more than sixty years after his death. Unfortunately, on account of the crumbling and unsubstantial nature of the stone, the inscription, which is in Latin, has become almost illegible. Mr. Gerrish was, for nearly fifty years, the minister of the town, and, perhaps, more than any other man, has left his mark upon its character. Near his grave is one which is supposed to be that of Rev. Antipas Newman, the second pastor of the church, who died Oct. 15, 1672. No stone appears to have been erected over his grave. Thus out of twelve pastors who have been settled over the church in Wenham, during a period of [two hundred and fifteen years, seven have died among their own people, and their graves are with us to this day.

Among the oldest monuments yet standing, are those of Sarah, wife of Walter Fairfield, who died Dec. 18, 1710; Ruth, wife of Thomas White, died 1713, aged 80; Sarah and Skipper Balch, who both died in 1714. A series of small stones, with half legible inscriptions, tells of the afflictions of John and Martha Gott, whose entire family of three sons and two daughters, was swept away between Oct. 29th and Dec. 5, 1737. Their names and years alone are recorded, without any expression of repining or even of sorrow; it was a grief too deep for tears.

It is interesting to trace the changes in the form



and structure, as well as in the inscriptions upon the monuments of the dead. The earliest stones were simply slabs of slate, of small size, and recording only the name and age of the departed. A little later, we find rude sculptures of angels, and Time with his hour-glass and scythe. Another age adds the urn and weeping willow, while more recently, these are replaced by wreaths and garlands, and other delineations of fancy. The rude slate has given place to the polished marble, and the brief record of the names and years of the deceased, has been too often succeeded by far-fetched quotations, or elaborate eulogy.

The burial of the dead has been practised among all nations, and some memorials of the departed have usually been erected even by savages. The Indian will often travel hundreds of miles from his way, to visit the graves of his ancestors. There is engraven, as it were, upon the heart of man, the feeling that the dead have not wholly ceased to live, and hence the desire to guard their remains from irreverent approach, and to preserve their memory among the living. The grounds, the monuments, the inscriptions, should all speak the deep, underlying sentiment of humanity upon the solemn subject of death. The thoughts and feelings expressed, should be those of pious trust and humble resignation. In general, there are no epitaphs like short and appropriate passages of Scripture, expressive of faith, of confidence in God, and of a hope of a joyful resurrection.

The grounds and all connected with the spot should breathe those soothing and tranquillizing influences, with which nature steals into our hours of sadness. It should be a spot attractive to the living; lovely, for its floral beauty, and grateful for its pleasant shades, as well as sacred for the relics it contains. Here the passions which agitate the breast in the strife and bustle of life, are hushed to rest. Here the mourner's grief may lose half its bitterness, till resignation springs as naturally from the grave, as the wild flowers that overspread the turf by which it is covered. The wild passions are subdued, the emotions controlled and repressed in the solemn presence of death. Hither young and old may retire in thoughtful moments, to escape the din of selfish strife, to open their hearts to the holiest impressions, and to catch some faint glimpses of the world to come. Thus the thoughtless as well as the sad, the gay as well as the mournful, are drawn into the circle of sacred inspirations, and find their spirits touched with the finest and purest emotions. And thus may a mutual relationship spring up between the burial ground and the walks of common life, till death itself becomes an accepted and a powerful element in the experience and discipline of the world.

A private burial-ground, for the members and connections of the Fairfield family, appears to have been very early laid out upon a knoll at a little distance from the place formerly occupied by them.

This family, once so prominent, have long since left the place, and this spot has been, in consequence, neglected and allowed to be overrun with briars and brushwood. Here is a tomb in a dilapidated state, in which many members of this ancient family were doubtless interred. Several grave-stones upon the side of the little hill, indicate to the infrequent visitor, the spot where some fellow-mortal lies sleeping. On the summit of the hill is a large slate slab with the following inscription:—

Here lies buried ye body  
of the Honorable  
WILLIAM FAIRFIELD, Esq.,  
sometime Speaker  
of the House of Representatives;  
and for many years  
a Deacon of ye Church  
in Wenham, and  
Representative for sd Town,  
who died Decr 18, 1742,  
in ye 81st year of his age.

And this is all that now remains, and almost all that can now be known of one who, in his day, filled so conspicuous a place in the affairs of his native town and State. I lately visited the spot and found the head-stone so overspread with ivy that it could hardly be discovered, amidst the shrubs and weeds by which it was surrounded. Thus time hurries us onward, and in the lapse of only a few years confounds the great and the small, the wise and the foolish, in one undistinguishable decay.\*

\* If this little volume should reach any of the surviving members of this once prominent family, it may remind them of their ancestors, and of the spot where they lie almost unnoticed and forgotten.

## PERSONAL AND FAMILY HISTORY.

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It is not my purpose here, to go into any extended genealogical researches. The labor and overpowering tediousness of such a task can only be known to those who have been engaged in similar investigations. Still, a short account of some of the old families which have figured in the history of the place, may, perhaps, be not without interest.

The most prominent name among the first settlers of the town was that of Fisk. Rev. John Fisk, who came from the county of Suffolk, in England, was the first minister of the place. As the parish of Wenham, in England, lies in the same county, it is not unlikely that the name of the town was taken from the original residence of this family. Rev. Mr. Fisk, after a residence of twelve years in Wenham, removed to Chelmsford, where he died. Besides him, three others, (probably brothers) of the name of Fisk, were among the original settlers, and did not leave with the colony

that removed to Chelmsford. They appear to have been men of property, and acted an important part in the infant settlement. Phineas and John Fisk were two of the first board of selectmen, and Wm. Fisk was the first town clerk. From the frequency with which the name occurs in the early records of baptisms, the descendants of the family appear to have been numerous, and for a hundred years or more, they acted a prominent part in town affairs. Three of them, at different periods, held the office of deacon of the church. Out of thirty-five times that the town sent a deputy to the General Court, before 1720, it was represented twenty times by some one of this name. The first school-master and the first commander of the militia, appointed in Wenham, was Capt. Thomas Fisk, who, for a period of twenty or thirty years, appears to have been the most important man in the town. As early as 1655, he was appointed town clerk, and two-pence granted to him for every order he should record. The first book of the town records is mostly in his hand-writing, which is not quite as legible as that of the best writing masters. He was a prominent actor in the series of measures which resulted in the division of the common lands. There continued to be several of the name in the place, until the latter part of the last century, when it was reduced to a single family, and more recently, it has become almost extinct. Several farms have been at different times, in posses-

sion of the family. The place however, where they lived longest, and which is the most identified with their name, was on a lane leading from the Ober place, (so called,) towards Wenham causeway. An old cellar alone remains to mark the spot, where generations lived, labored, and passed away.

Another conspicuous name in the early records is that of the Gott family. Charles Gott was the only one of the first settlers who was honored with the title of Mr. After the removal of Rev. John Fisk, he was appointed, in conjunction with James Moulton, to procure a minister, and when the church was re-organized, under Mr. Newman, in 1663, his name stands next to that of the pastor. He was also a member of the first board of selectmen chosen by the town, and he repeatedly served as representative to the General Court. The family continued to act a prominent part in town affairs, until the time of the Revolution, when those of them who remained, appear to have left the place. Tradition says that they were tanners, and that their tan-yard, which stood on the north side of the road to Danvers, and a little west of the house now occupied by Mr. Joseph Kent, was once the largest in Essex county. Many stones, inscribed with their names, are still standing in the burial-ground. The entire family of Mr. John Gott, consisting of five children, were swept away in 1737, within a few weeks of each other.



The name is still common at Rockport, Gloucester and other places in Essex county. But here in their original seat, none survive to perpetuate their remembrance.

No name is more conspicuous in the first century and a half of the history of the town, than that of the Fairfield family. John Fairfield, the first of the family, died Dec. 22, 1646, leaving two sons, Walter and Benjamin. The inventory of his estate, as returned by Elizabeth, his wife, was £113 3s. 7d. — a large estate for those days. In 1692 and 1700, Walter Fairfield served as representative to the General Court, the first time, with the condition that he was to have two shillings a day for his salary, and bear his own expenses.

His son, the Hon. William Fairfield, was, for many years, a useful and highly respected citizen. In 1723, he was chosen to represent the town in the Legislature, to which he was again chosen in 1732, and he continued to be re-elected, as it is stated in the records, "by a great majority," ten times in succession, until his death, in 1742. Nor were his talents appreciated only by his own townsmen. He was chosen Speaker of the House of Representatives, the highest office then in the gift of the people. The Governor and deputy-Governor was then appointed in England. For many years no name is more conspicuous upon the town records. He appears to have been one of those shrewd, clear-headed, practical men, whose



minds are formed and trained by reflection and experience, rather than by a knowledge of books, or by intercourse with the world. He held, at different times, every office in the gift of the people of his native town and State, and in all, he gained the confidence of those whom he was called to serve. He was also an active member of the church, and for many years one of its deacons.

We regret that so little can now be ascertained concerning Mr. Fairfield. An anecdote is still told of him, which is quite characteristic. The common mode of travelling in those days was on horseback. Setting out to attend a session of the Legislature, he became so absorbed in thinking of the business on which they were to enter, and upon his duties as Speaker, that he is said to have actually reached Boston, bridle in hand, before discovering that he had left his horse at home.

The names of Goldsmith and Waldron are prominent among the first settlers of Wenham, and frequently appear in the records of the town, down to the period of the Revolution. Both have since become extinct, or survive only in the female line. The Waldron place was in the eastern part of the town, and is supposed to be the one now occupied by widow Elizabeth Dodge.

Among the list of active and useful citizens, the name of Capt. Wm. Rogers should not be omitted. For a period of nearly thirty years, he officiated as town clerk, and any one who has taxed his eyes

and racked his brain in deciphering the hieroglyphics of the early records, will know how to appreciate his plain and legible hand-writing. He was the second school-master employed in town, and appears to have been the second person who enjoyed the high military dignity of captain in "ye trainband." Five times he was chosen by the town, to represent them in the Legislature, which he appears to have done with general acceptance. He was evidently a man of integrity and energy, and he was accordingly rewarded with the respect and confidence of his fellow-citizens.

The name of Tarbox first occurs in Wenham about the beginning of the last century. The family occupied the farm lying upon the road to Topsfield, and now owned by Mr. Smith. During the latter part of the last century, Dea. Samuel Tarbox was one of the leading and influential citizens of the town. He is described by some who still remember him, as a man of strong common sense and much force of character. In his younger days he had been, for those times, quite a traveller; and the story is still told of him that, as the result of his observations, he had come to the sage conclusion, which he used often oracularly to repeat, "that if a man could not live in Essex county, he could not live anywhere." A daughter of his was the mother of Col. Paul Porter, from whom the above anecdote was obtained.

We have mentioned the names of several old

families, once prominent in the history of the town, who have passed away. But several of the early settlers have descendants still remaining, to perpetuate the ancestral name. We apprehend, indeed, that it is rather rare to find among our restless, shifting, emigrating population, so many families, who have occupied for more than two hundred years, the place of their original settlement. It has been difficult, in this part of the work to know where to begin or when to stop. Several families, perhaps equally worthy of notice, I have been compelled to omit for want of space, and difficulty of obtaining information.

James Moulton was one of the original settlers of Wenham. He was one of the first men chosen by the town, to serve on the grand jury, and he was afterwards elected to various important stations. On the removal of Rev. Mr. Fisk to Chelmsford, he and Charles Gott was appointed a committee to procure a successor, and when the church was re-organized under Rev. Mr. Newman, in 1663, his name appears among the male members. He was afterwards, in 1674, chosen the first deacon. From the amount paid by him, in the early tax lists, he appears to have been a man of large property.

The name of Kimball has always been a prominent one in the history of Wenham. Richard Kimball, the first of the name, settled in the west part of the town, probably upon the place now oc-

cupied by Mr. Joseph Day. He appears to have been the largest tax-payer among the early settlers, and his descendants have generally been in easy circumstances. Five of the name have filled the office of deacon in the Congregational Church, and others have had their full share of municipal duties and responsibilities. Lieut. Edmund Kimball led a body of his neighbors and townsmen in the brilliant expedition against Louisburgh in 1745, and upon the death of his captain, succeeded to the command of his company in the siege of that fortress. His promising career was terminated at the early age of twenty-eight.

Capt. Edmund Kimball, a nephew of the preceding, was for many years a distinguished and successful merchant in Newburyport. While yet a youth, he was drafted and served in the army of the Revolution. For some years he was the commander of a vessel, but at an early age left the seas, though he was afterwards the owner of several vessels. His later years were spent in retirement in his native town, for which he had always cherished a feeling of strong attachment. He gave, in 1827, \$500 to the Congregational Church in Wenham, for the support of the gospel, and also the communion service of silver, which is still in use. His character combined in a remarkable degree, the energy and enterprise of the successful man of business with uncommon gentleness and simplicity in private life. He died

December, 1847, at the advanced age of eighty-five.

The first representative chosen by Wenham to the General Court was Joseph Batchelder, elected in 1644. His descendants have remained in Wenham until the present time. Mark Batchelder, probably a son of the preceding, was killed in the assault upon the fort at the Narragansetts in 1675. Various farms have at different times been occupied by the members of this family. Their oldest seat is supposed to be on the farm now occupied by Mr. Israel Batchelder.

The name of Dodge has always been numerous in Wenham and the adjoining towns. It is said that three brothers originally emigrated to America, one of whom settled on Long Island, one in Salem, and one in Wenham, and from these brothers all of this name in the country are supposed to be descended. Richard, who settled in this town, appears to have left a numerous posterity. For more than a century there have been more voters of this name than of any other in the place. Their principal residence appears to have always been at and about the Neck. They have generally been respectable and influential citizens. Five of the name have served as Deacons of the Congregational Church, and two have been deacons of the Baptist Church. Three have represented the town in the legislature, and others have borne their share of municipal honors and labors. Many of

this name have emigrated from Wenham to the adjoining towns, and their descendants are now to be found in almost every part of the country.

The place now belonging to Mr. George Dodge was occupied during the early part of this century by Samuel Blanchard, Esq., a gentleman of high respectability and intelligence, and who, for several years, represented the town in the Legislature. His son, Francis Blanchard, Esq., was an eminent lawyer in Boston, but died at an early age. A daughter of the latter became the wife of Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, who thus came in possession of the estate which, for some years, he occupied as a summer residence. Connected with Mr. Blanchard was the Gardner family, who resided near the spot now occupied by the cottage of Gen. Andrews. Mrs. Gardner was a sister of Col. Pickering. They subsequently removed to Boston, where their descendants became wealthy merchants and ship-owners. None of either of these families now remain in Wenham.

The name of Porter has been one of the most conspicuous in the history of Wenham. John Porter removed to Wenham from Danvers, about the year 1680. He was one of the two sons of John Porter, who emigrated from England to this country, and bought, in 1643, a large tract of land near Danvers Plains, hence often called Porter's Plains. Tradition says that he lived upon land now belonging to Mr. William Porter, near the outlet



of Wenham Lake, and which is still marked by a stump of an ancient apple-tree. He purchased a large tract of land extending from the Lake to Pleasant Pond, a portion of which has been in possession of the family without alienation for nearly two hundred years, and is now owned and occupied by Dr. John Porter, one of his lineal descendants. In 1712 and 1726, he was chosen to represent the town in the Provincial Legislature, and at different times held various posts of trust and responsibility in the town. He died, according to his tomb stone, which is still standing, in 1753, aged 95 years. He had a son, Jonathan Porter, who like his father, was a citizen of more than ordinary distinction. In 1745-'46 and '47, he served as representative in the General Court.

Tyler Porter, a son of Jonathan, was educated as a physician, but from some reason never practiced his profession. He was a man of strong mental powers and much energy of character, was a civil magistrate, and for many years was elected to all the civil stations in the gift of his fellow citizens. No man acted a more conspicuous part in the revolutionary history of the town. He died June, 1811, aged 75 years. Billy Porter, a brother of the preceding, was also a man of much energy and force of character. He served in the army during the entire period of the Revolutionary War, and rose to the rank of Major in the continental troops. He was the first representative chosen by



the town after the Revolution, and was re-elected in 1793. Soon after this, he removed to Upper Beverly, where he died in 1797.

Jonathan Porter was the only son of Tyler Porter who settled in Wenham. He was an extensive farmer, and in the latter part of his life engaged also in commerce, having built a brig and a schooner, which last was named Wenham, in compliment to his native town.

The late Henry Porter was a son of Jonathan Porter. He was the inventor of Porter's Burning Fluid, for which he obtained a patent in 1835, with the exclusive privilege of manufacturing and selling the same within the United States for fourteen years. It was first introduced into New York city and some of the Western States, and subsequently into Boston. Since then it has been steadily coming into general use, and gaining popular favor. It is estimated that more of this fluid is now sold in Boston than of any and every kind of oil. Mr. Porter was possessed of an active and inquisitive mind, as well as of considerable ingenuity. He also invented a lamp for the use of his fluid, and the nurse lamp now so general in sickness. For several of his last years, his mind was shattered by its own excessive activity, and he finally died at the early age of forty-two.

✓ The name of Austin Kilham occurs among the earliest settlers of Wenham. He is supposed to have come from the West Riding of Yorkshire, where

the parish of Kilham still exists, situated near Beverly, the principal market town in that part of England. From this Austin Kilham, all who bear the name of Kilham, which has now become considerably diffused in our country, are supposed to be descended. The family have, at different periods, taken an active and prominent part in the affairs of the town.

The name of Daniel Kilham, Jr., is quite conspicuous in the revolutionary history of the place. He was an active member of the Committee of Correspondence, and of the various Committees of Safety, to whom the affairs of the town were entrusted before the re-organization of the State Government.

His son, the Hon. Daniel Kilham, born January, 15, 1751, was, for many years, an active politician and a prominent citizen of Essex County. He early showed a taste and aptitude for study, which induced his father to give him what was rare in those days—an opportunity to acquire a liberal education. After finishing his preparatory studies at Dummer Academy, he was admitted to Harvard College in 1773, from which he received, in 1777, the degree of A. B., and in 1785, that of A. M. After graduating at Cambridge, he studied medicine with Dr. Holyoke, of Salem, but finding the profession not agreeable to his tastes, he soon removed to Newburyport, and engaged in the business of an Apothecary. Here he resided fifteen years,

during which he was repeatedly chosen a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, and took an active and prominent part in the discussion of the questions, which then excited public attention. While in Newburyport, he formed an intimate acquaintance and friendship with Hon. Rufus King, afterwards Minister to England, and United States Senator from New York; and many letters from Mr. King are still in the possession of Dr. Kilham's relatives.

In 1804, Dr. Kilham was compelled by ill health to relinquish his business, and he then returned to the old homestead, as he expressed it, to die. His health, though it continued feeble for several years, at length revived, and he lived to extreme old age. The near prospect of death did not prevent his commencing many improvements upon his estate, of which he scarcely hoped to receive any benefit. He planted trees for others, but happily for his friends he lived many years to enjoy them. He took much interest in the cultivation of fruit trees, at a time when little attention was paid to the subject, and for many years his apples, pears, and plums were highly prized in Beverly and Salem.

In politics he was a Democrat of the Jefferson School, and was repeatedly nominated for election to Congress, but the party to which he belonged being in a minority in his district, he never attained those honors which his talents and attainments

well deserved. In 1802, he was appointed General Commissioner of Bankruptcy for Massachusetts, by President Jefferson. He was also a member of Gov. Gerry's Council in 1811, and the same year was appointed Justice of the Court of Common Pleas for Essex County. From 1808 to 1835, he held the commission of Justice of the Peace and of the Quorum. He was also one of the founders of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in whose proceedings he took much interest.

Dr. Kilham was a man of extensive and varied reading, of retentive memory, and so thoroughly posted in political history as to make him an able debater and a formidable antagonist. Party spirit at this period run very high, and political subjects were discussed with great warmth and animosity. Frequent debates arose between him and Hon. Timothy Pickering, and other leaders of the Federalists, in which both parties exerted their best powers, and so nearly matched were the opponents that the partisans of each usually claimed the victory for their champion.

In private life, Dr. Kilham was a man of quiet manners and retiring disposition. He was a fine specimen of a gentleman of the old school, somewhat formal and reserved in his habits, but always kind and courteous, independent in his opinions and fearless in expressing them, a faithful friend, as well as a resolute and determined opponent, an excellent type of a class of men, which has now

almost passed away. He retained as long as he lived, the old-fashioned small clothes, thus preserving the dress as well as the manners of his younger days. Dr. Kilham was never married, his house being kept by a widowed sister. He was a kind and loving brother, and for his sister's children he felt a father's care, and acted a father's part. In all that concerned the well-being of his native town, he evinced a deep interest, and repeatedly received the public thanks of his fellow citizens for his services in their behalf. He died quite suddenly at the advanced age of eighty-eight, as was supposed of a disease of the heart. He was found dead in his garden, among the trees and flowers, which he had planted and so dearly loved, his countenance retaining in death the same calm and pleasing expression, which it had borne through life.

Among the distinguished citizens of Wenham no name has been so generally known, or so highly honored as that of the Hon. Timothy Pickering. He was born in Salem, July 17, 1745, where his father was a respectable merchant. After graduating at Harvard in 1763, he pursued the study of the law, and was in due time admitted to the bar. In the difficulties which about this time arose between the mother country and her colonies, he took from the first an active and decided part, and soon became the leader and champion of the Whigs in the region where he lived. He was a

member of all the committees of correspondence, and performed himself the entire labor of the writing. The address voted by the inhabitants of Salem to Gov. Gage, disclaiming all desire to profit by the closure of the port of Boston, and the transfer to that place of the meetings of the Legislature, was from his pen. On hearing of the battle of Lexington, he marched the regiment of which he was commander to Charlestown, but arrived too late to cut off the retreat of the British. In the same year, upon the organization of a provisional government, he was appointed a Judge of the Common Pleas for Essex County, and sole Judge of the Maritime Court, which had cognizance of all prize cases for the Middle District, including Boston and Essex County. He retained these offices till 1777, when he joined the continental army in New Jersey, and received the appointment of Adjutant General from Washington. He was present at the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and continued with the army until they went into winter quarters at Valley Forge. About this time, he was chosen by Congress, a member of the Board of War, then sitting at Yorktown, Penn. Here he remained until he was appointed to succeed Gen. Greene, as Quarter-Master-General, an office which he held to the close of the war, and in which his energy and efficiency contributed much to the surrender of Cornwallis, at Yorktown. His services and fidelity during the Revolution, had se-



cured the confidence and esteem of Washington, who, soon after his election to the Presidency, appointed Mr. Pickering Postmaster General. He was also charged with several important negotiations with the Indian tribes. Upon the resignation of Gen. Knox, in 1794, he was transferred to the place of Secretary of War. In 1795, he was appointed Secretary of State, in the place of Mr. Randolph. This office he continued to fill through the rest of Washington's administration and during a part of that of his successor. He was removed by Mr. Adams, in May, 1800, but was soon after elected Senator from Massachusetts, to fill up the unexpired term of Mr. Foster, who had resigned. In 1805, he was re-elected Senator, for the full term of six years. After its close, he was chosen a member of the Executive Council, and during the war of 1812, was a member of the Board of War, for defence of the State. In 1814, he was elected Representative to Congress, from the Essex district, which station he resigned, March, 1817, and retired to private life. His death occurred at Salem, Jan. 29, 1829, in the 84th year of his age.

For many years, Mr. Pickering occupied the place in Wenham, now owned by Messrs. A. & J. Lowe, upon which he resided during the intervals of leisure from public life. He was very fond of agriculture, and displayed the same energy in the management of his estate, which had made him so distinguished in public affairs. He was a man of



large stature and great industry. Many now living, can remember him as he appeared leading the mowers upon his farm, in the morning, when perhaps he would be summoned and set out on horseback before evening, for Washington, to consult on affairs of the highest national importance. He was the first president of the Essex Agricultural Society, in the proceedings of which he took much interest and contributed several valuable articles still preserved in their published Reports. He was beloved by his neighbors and townsmen, and always manifested a deep interest in all that concerned the well-being of his rural home.

In the various public stations which he filled, Mr. Pickering showed a clear and penetrating mind, sound judgment, and indomitable energy. His stern, unbending patriotism, the lofty dignity of his public character, and the simplicity of his manners in private life, remind one of the ancient Roman. Perhaps no one was ever more trusted and confided in by his friends, or more bitterly denounced by his enemies. The numerous public stations to which he was called, are the best testimonials of the regard in which he was held by his cotemporaries. It is enough for us to say, that he possessed through life, the esteem and confidence of Washington.

## ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

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THE early settlers of New England fled from persecution at home, that they might worship God according to the dictates of conscience. Their first work after landing on our shores, was to organize a church, and make arrangements for the regular performance of public worship; and as their settlements extended, no sooner had they built houses to shelter themselves and their families from the severity of the climate, than they proceeded to erect a sanctuary and secure the services of a regular pastor.

For the first three or four years after the earliest settlements were formed in Wenham, the inhabitants probably attended public worship in Salem. The first sermon preached within the limits of the town, of which we have any record, was delivered by the celebrated Hugh Peters,\* in 1642. The

\* Mr. Peters afterwards returned to England, where he performed a conspicuous part in the changes which followed upon the Civil War. He became a famous preacher among the Puritans, and was appointed by Cromwell, as one of his chaplains. After the restoration of Charles II. he was publicly beheaded on Tower Hill.

village was then called Enon, and in allusion to it, doubtless, the text, "In Ænon, near to Salem, for there was much water there," John iii. 23, was selected. The grassy hillock, then occupied by the distinguished preacher, long retained the name of "Peters' pulpit," but it has recently given way, like many other relics of antiquity, to the encroaching spirit of enterprize which marks our age. The little eminence has been entirely removed, and the place where it stood is now occupied by the extensive ice-houses of Gage & Co. It requires some effort of imagination to recall the scene as it existed two hundred years ago. The lake indeed remains, and still reflects from its crystal surface, the overarching sky. But the dense forests which then lined the shores, and cast their shadows upon the glassy waters, have long since disappeared. The very hills have been smoothed away by the art and industry of man. The "salvages" who then fished in the quiet lake, or pursued their game through the tangled wilderness, have passed away. The wolf and the deer have given place to herds of grazing cattle. The shores and sloping hills, then covered with tangled thickets, gnarled oaks, and lofty pines, the haunts of wild beasts and venomous reptiles, now exhibit a prospect of cultivated fields and tasteful dwellings.

"Where peeped the hut, the palace towers,  
Where skimmed the bark, the tall ship lowers;  
Joy gaily carols where was silence rude,  
And cultured thousands throng the solitude."

Nor is it the outward face of nature alone, that has changed. Those stern and hardy men who were striving to subdue the howling wilderness, and thus secure for themselves a free and peaceful home, and who had that day met to hear the word of God for the first time, at their own doors—they too have passed away, and even their graves can now scarcely be traced. But the preaching of the gospel and the regular worship of the sanctuary, then introduced within our borders, have never failed.

The next year, Mr. John Fisk, who had taught the first grammar school established in Salem, and while thus engaged, had occasionally assisted Mr. Peters in his ministerial labors, removed to Wenham, and through his efforts a church was regularly organized, on the 8th of October, 1644. He at once became its pastor, and continued his labors in the town till 1656, apparently much to the satisfaction of the people. To the duties of the pastor he added those of physician, so that Cotton Mather remarks concerning him: "Among the most famous preachers and writers of the gospel, with whom the primitive church was blessed, there was Luke, the beloved physician, the blessed scholar and colleague of the apostle Paul. And among the first preachers and writers which rendered the primitive times of New England happy, there was one who might be called the beloved physician; one to whom there might also be given the eulogy

which the ancients think was given to Luke — a brother whose praise was in the gospel, throughout all the churches. This was Mr. John Fisk.”

This appears like high eulogy, but for the times in which he lived, Mr. Fisk was evidently a superior man. He was descended from a pious ancestry, and was early devoted to the service of Christ and the church. His parents, after carefully instructing him at home, sent him to the grammar school, and afterwards to the University. He graduated at Immanuel College, Cambridge, and after studying theology, was engaged for several years, in the work of the ministry. In consequence, however, of the persecution then carried on against the Puritans, and the difficulties and annoyances in the way of preaching, in accordance with the advice of his friends, he turned his attention to medicine, and obtained the usual license to practise as a physician. Yet he was still so desirous to resume the labors of the ministry that he determined to remove to America. He had previously married a lady of high rank and uncommon worth. To her parents, his purpose to come to America was so disagreeable, that they resolved to deprive him of several hundred pounds, which were the just share of his wife in her father's estate. At the call of duty, however, he did not hesitate to sacrifice property, and all the endearments of home and kindred. Disguising himself to escape the fury of his persecutors, he embarked, in company with the

Rev. John Allen, afterwards the first minister of Dedham. Of the voyage, Cotton Mather says:—  
“They entertained the passengers with two sermons every day, besides other agreeable devotions, which filled the voyage with so much of religion that one of the passengers being examined about his going to divert himself with a hook and line on the Lord’s day, protested that ‘he did not know when the Lord’s day was ; he thought every day was a Sabbath day, for,’ said he, ‘they do nothing but pray and preach all the week long.’”

After arriving in this country, Mr. Fisk appears to have taught some years in Cambridge, and afterwards in Salem. Of his services in the latter city, the Mayor of Salem, in a public address in 1842, says, “We may all well be proud of the honest fame of the first teacher of our grammar school. He was, by the concurrent testimony of the most learned and honored of his day and generation, ranked high in the list of able, useful and devoted ministers of the gospel. One of his scholars was Sir George Downing, who was a member of the first class that graduated at Harvard College.” His pupils, it is said, were fitted “to read any classical authors into English, and readily make and speak true Latin, and write it in verse as well as prose, and perfectly to decline the paradigms of nouns and verbs in the Greek tongue.”

Preferring, however, the work of the ministry to the labors of the teacher, he gave up his school in



1643, and, removing to Wenham, joined his fortunes to those of the infant plantation. Upon what salary he was settled, we have no means of ascertaining. A piece of land appears to have been granted to him, and in addition to this, he had probably such contributions as the people were able to raise. It is stated that "he drew largely upon his own estate, for the benefit of the new plantation."\* In 1654, it was voted by the town, that, "the yearly maintenance of our minister shall bee fortie pounds a year, whether Mr. Fisk stay among us, or we procure another;" and again, that "Mr. Gott, James Moulton and John Fisk are chosen to go to Mr. Miller, to give him a call in case Mr. Fisk leaveth us." December, 1655, it was ordered "that in case Mr. Brock be procured to stay amongst us, whatsoever the town hath engaged, or shall be levied on any land, shall be paid, two-thirds part in wheat, barley or peas, butter or pork, and the other third part in Indian corn." In consequence of the extreme scarcity of money, taxes and contributions were very generally paid in produce. According to the expenses of living and the means of the people, £40 a year would seem to be full as large a salary as is now usually paid in country towns.

From the previous votes, it appears that Mr. Fisk had already formed the purpose of leaving

\* In 1643, he gave ten acres of land for the benefit of the church and society.



Wenham. He remained, however, till 1656, when, with a majority of the church, he removed to Chelmsford, where he lived for twenty years, discharging the duties at once, of the minister and the physician. "For twenty years," says Cotton Mather, "did he shine in the golden candlestick of Chelmsford, a plain, but an able, powerful and useful preacher of the gospel, rarely, if ever, by sickness hindered from the exercise of his ministry. He died in his new field of labor in 1676, at the advanced age of seventy-five.

Rev. W. Allen, in his history of Chelmsford, has given high testimony to the value of Mr. Fisk's labors in that town. The trials and hardships which he was there called to endure, might have disheartened youthful vigor, but were borne with fortitude and even cheerfulness. For the use of his flock, he wrote a catechism entitled, "Watering of the Olive Plants in Christ's Garden." This little work is moderate in doctrine, catholic in spirit, and admirably suited to the purpose for which it was designed." His epitaph in Latin, is as follows: "*Vixi et quem dederas cursum mihi Christe peregi, pertæsus vitæ, suaviter opto mori.* (I have lived and finished the work which Thou, Saviour, didst give me; weary of life, I long to depart in peace.)"

After the departure of Mr. Fisk, with a majority of the church, those who remained, were left in a very low and enfeebled condition. It has been

supposed by some that no ecclesiastical organization existed till, as they say, the church was again gathered, in 1663, and the Rev. Antipas Newman was ordained as its pastor. There are, however, reasons to believe that the remaining members continued to act as a church, though no distinct record of their proceedings has been preserved. At a town meeting held Dec. 6, 1656, it was voted that, "Whereas the town hath taken into consideration the great want of a minister amongst us, it is therefore ordered that Mr. Gott and James Moulton are hereby chosen to endeavor to procure one, and to present him with the promise of £45 a year, for his yearly maintenance." The next year they obtained the services of Rev. Antipas Newman, and we find recorded a vote of the town, Nov. 8, 1657, that his salary should be paid half in wheat and half in Indian corn;" and again it was unanimously voted, that "the town will allow towards Mr. Newman's house the sum of £40 sterling, and £10 more towards the providing of other accommodations." Two years later we find a vote to raise the sum of £50 for their minister's support, which was £10 more than they had ever given to Mr. Fisk. These facts abundantly prove that though the church must have been very much weakened by the loss of a majority of its members, yet the remainder were not at all despondent, but rather aroused to new effort. Mr. Newman was married in 1658, to Elizabeth Winthrop, a daugh-

ter of Gov. Winthrop. He appears to have preached for several years, as a regular supply, but for some reason was not ordained till Dec. 8, 1663. At that time, the church appears to have been re-organized and a new covenant adopted.

The first house of worship was small, and designed to be only temporary. It stood upon a small eminence near the house of Mr. Henry Tarr. As early as 1660, we find a vote of the town, to build "a new meeting-house, twenty-four feet square, and twelve feet stud, the old meeting-house to be sold, partly to defray the cost, and the selectmen empowered to put it out to be built." But afterwards it was determined to repair the old one, and the new house was not completed till 1663. The expense of this work was defrayed, partly, by a rate of £80 3s. 8d.

The ministry of Mr. Newman does not appear to have been distinguished by any remarkable event. He was a man of excellent religious character, and his services were acceptable to his people. In 1665, his salary was raised to "£50 a year, and two pounds of butter for every milch cow in the parish, and this sum to be paid promptly." Moreover, as was customary in those days, a house and land enough for a small farm was given him by the town. His residence is supposed to have been the place where the house of Dr. John Porter now stands. Here he died, Oct. 15, 1672, nine years after his ordination, and fifteen years from the

commencement of his ministry. Tradition says that he was buried near the grave of Rev. Mr. Swain, but there is nothing now to mark the spot. He left five children, and a widow, who afterwards married Zerubabel Endicott, a son of Gov. Endicott, of Salem.

The church did not long remain destitute. At a town meeting, Jan. 5, 1673, or within less than three months of Mr. Newman's death, we find the following record: "For the encouragement of Mr. Gerrish to settle amongst us, it is voted, that during the time that God shall continue him with us, he shall have £50 within the town, per year, and twenty cords of wood, with the use of the minister's house and land, with the appurtenances." From other records, however, it appears that Mr. Gerrish did not come to Wenham till May 31st. He was born at Newbury, March 23, 1650, graduated at Harvard College, 1669, and was ordained pastor of the church in Wenham, Jan. 13, 1674. Here he remained in the active discharge of the duties of the ministry, till his death, Jan. 6, 1720, in the seventieth year of his age, and the forty-seventh year of his ministry. During this long period, he preserved, in a remarkable degree, the confidence and affection of his people. Soon after his settlement, a house was built for him by the town, and a little later, a grant was made to him of twelve acres of land, and a share in the common lands.

The town taxes at this period averaged about £30 a year, while the State and County tax, (or county rate as it was called,) varied from £4 to £8. Thus the amount paid for the support of the gospel, at this time, exceeded the entire taxes of the town, for all other purposes. This sum was raised partly by renting a portion of the common lands, but principally by subscription. The mode of proceeding, when any were unwilling to contribute their share, may be seen from the following record: "Voted, 3d of 11th month, 1659, that Richard Coy and Thomas Fisk are chosen, to take an accompt of our neighbors what they will allow for our minister's maintenance, and to collect his said maintenance for the year; that is, to demand it in case of defect of payment, and to distrain, if need require." As new families moved into town, seats in the church were rented to them, at prices varying from six to eight shillings a year, with the condition of contributing their share to the expenses of repairing the house. The seating of the people in the meeting-house, appears to have been left to the care of the selectmen.

Some of the people from the southern part of Ipswich, who were in the habit of attending church here, being negligent about paying their share for the support of public worship, it was promptly voted that "the selectmen shall agree with them upon such terms as they shall see meet, and in case they shall not comply, to discharge them from

coming." An amicable arrangement was at length formed, by which they were to pay to Wenham one-third of the expense of building the house, and also their share towards keeping it in repair, and paying the salary of the minister. Accordingly, the west gallery and several seats in the body of the church were assigned to them.

Records like these are interesting, as throwing light upon the spirit of the times. No individual was then allowed to evade obligations, which were regarded as resting equally upon all. Every male member of the parish was taxed at five shillings per head; a contribution was taken up every Sabbath, and any one who failed to do his part was immediately fined. The money appears in all instances, to have been promptly paid at the beginning of the year.

In 1688, an agreement was signed by thirty-eight persons, to pay to Mr. Gerrish annually, the sum of £60 — £10 of it in money, and to increase his allowance of wood to thirty cords a year. At this period, the fees of the sexton for taking care of the house and ringing the bell, were about twenty shillings a year.

The early part of Mr. Gerrish's ministry was a period of trial and suffering in Wenham, as well as in other New England towns. In 1675, or two years after his settlement, King Phillip's War broke out, and five men were impressed from the town for the service of the colony. The fury of



the enemy, it is true, fell mostly upon the frontier and more exposed towns. Yet against such an enemy, lurking in swamps and forests, and always most dangerous when least expected, security could only be obtained by constant vigilance. The influence of these exciting times could not fail to be unfavorable to the moral progress and spiritual interests of the little community. Yet in spite of all difficulties, the church and parish continually prospered. The pastor, by his zealous and faithful labors, was able to preserve the confidence and affection of his people. Every reference to "our minister," in the records of the town, gives evidence of their general esteem of his character.

About this period, a practice was introduced, which afterwards became the occasion of many difficulties. We refer to the "half-way covenant." One of the earliest measures after the colony was organized, was a law, requiring that church members alone, should be allowed to vote in civil affairs, or to hold any office. This was evidently a great error, yet less surprising, when we consider the spirit of the times and the peculiar circumstances of the people. The religious principles and character of the earliest settlers were such as to occasion no inconvenience from this regulation. When, however, a second generation grew upon the soil, many of them not church members, but whose claim to all the rights of citizenship, could not properly be disputed, the injustice of this law be-



came manifest. To obviate this difficulty, a scheme was introduced by a synod, which met in 1662, to determine who were proper subjects for baptism. By this scheme, "Persons baptized in infancy, understanding the doctrines of faith, and solemnly owning the covenant before the church, wherein they give up themselves and their children to the Lord, and subject themselves to the government of Christ and his church, their children are to be baptized, although still excluded from the communion." They were, moreover, allowed certain privileges, and permitted to act in ecclesiastical affairs. In this way, too, they became voters, and obtained the right to hold office, and these privileges furnished strong inducements for all moral and respectable people to become thus connected with the church.

This scheme was not adopted without considerable opposition, many churches and ministers regarding it as unscriptural and dangerous. By degrees, however, it prevailed very generally, and in many places continued in use almost till our own times. To guard against laxity of discipline and other evils, which in many places attended it, Mr. Gerrish drew up "a form for such as own the covenant and offer their children for baptism."

About this time the unhappy excitement respecting witchcraft, was at its height. It originated in the neighboring town of Danvers, and extended to several of the adjoining villages. A

person in Wenham, whose name is not mentioned, accused Mrs. Hale, wife of the Rev. John Hale, of Beverly, of witchcraft; but her excellence and worth were so well known and appreciated that no one appears to have believed the charge. "The whole community was convinced that the accusers, in crying out upon Mrs. Hale, had perjured themselves, and from that moment their power was destroyed, the awful delusion ceased, the curtain fell and a close was put to one of the most tremendous tragedies in the history of real life." The belief in witchcraft was not at this period confined to New England; it prevailed throughout the civilized world. Statutes against it were enacted by the wisest legislators, and sentence of death pronounced upon those who were accused of it, by the most learned and cautious judges of Europe. And when we consider the peculiar education and circumstances of the early settlers of Massachusetts, it will not appear strange that they should have the prejudices and errors of the wisest statesmen, and of the most learned jurists of their age.

The excitement which pervaded the region, of course extended to Wenham, and four of the jury who tried and presented most of those who were executed, belonged to this place. We have no record, however, that the witches ever held any of their pow-wows within our bounds, albeit one might suppose the great swamp to be a very fit place for their rendezvous.

During the long period of Mr. Gerrish's ministry, the church and people under his care appear to have greatly prospered. Careful attention was paid to cases of discipline, and to everything which might contribute to the spiritual welfare of his flock. The assistance of the church and its pastor was often invited to join in organizing churches in other places, and to give advice at councils, in cases of difficulty. Many such occasions are recorded in the histories of the adjoining towns.

Transgressors of the laws and regulations of the church did not escape unrebuked. The following is a form of "absolution," granted to those who, after being reproved, gave evidence of penitence and humility :

"Though you have greatly sinned against the Lord, this church, and your own soul, yet, seeing you humble yourself before God, and penitently fly to the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, resolving through grace, to do so no more; we tell you as in John ii. 1, 2, and 1 John i. 9, Isaiah lv. 7, 8, Prov. xxviii. 13. This church doth now loose the bonds laid upon you, and receive you again into their communion; who are to receive you and not upbraid you with your fall, and rejoice in your recovery. And we exhort and charge you that you watch more carefully for the future, and that you avoid temptations, and accept reproofs, and see that you turn not again to your former ways of sin, but obey the Spirit, and keep close to God in the means of your preservation. So help you God, in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This form being publicly read and assented to, the offender was restored to his standing in the church.

In 1705, a new covenant was formed and solemnly approved by the church. This covenant was read and adopted after the communion in July, and again sanctioned in March of the following year, and still again in 1710, and is as follows :

“ We, the communicants of the church in Wenham, being under a deep sense of the distress of the church of God in general, and of the heavy and wasting judgments which have been on this land, and in pursuance of diverse declarations recommended to us by our much honored and well affected rulers, exhorting all well minded among us to do their utmost to check and suppress the growing immoralities and profaneness too manifest in the midst of us; and to endeavor to promote the necessary and much desired work of reformation in ourselves, ours, and others. As one proper means, among others, we do agree and purpose, (Divine grace helping and encouraging) vigorously and resolvedly to set ourselves in our several capacities and relations, to detect, prosecute, and reform the growing enormities, which are the enemies and dishonor of our profession and religion.

1. “ We will more strictly watch over our own hearts and lives, that we may become more exemplary and inoffensive in our conversation toward God and men.

2. “ We will faithfully watch over one another and submit ourselves to the brotherly counsels and admonitions, which may charitably and regularly be given, one to another, and from another to ourselves or ours, as occasion may be offered.

3. “ In particular, we will take heed of the love of the world, that it cause us not to neglect our duty to God in our general calling, or abate the zeal and care which we should have of the glory of God.

4. “ We will draw near to God in his ordinances, and we will not indulge ourselves in formality and drowsiness in the

worship of God. Nor will we allow ourselves or ours, in sensuality, intemperance, or excess in meats, drinks, or apparel.

5. "That we will more strictly guard our thoughts, words and actions, on the Lord's day, and will endeavor to restrain all within our gates from profaning any part of it.

6. "We will more carefully inspect the manners of our families, and endeavor to command our children and households after us, to serve the Lord.

7. "We will, without partiality, bear our testimony against such transgressions and enormities as shall fall within our observation.

"If so be, by these or other means, we may promote the glorious work of reformation, and obtain the removal of God's wasting judgments we labor under, and the averting of omens impending, and the return of God's gracious presence, with the restoration of his wonted favors and blessings, as in former times, we may be happy."

This covenant shows the strictly practical character of religion in those times, and especially the care and diligence with which church members watched over one another, as well as over their friends and neighbors.

Many of the people from the south part of Ipswich had been in the habit of attending church in Wenham, and had materially contributed to the support of the gospel here. But in 1714, fourteen church members and seventeen families were dismissed, to form a new church at Ipswich Hamlets, now Hamilton. £39 11s. 9d. were allowed to them for their share, which was estimated to be one-third, in the meeting-house.

Mr. Gerrish continued to serve the town with

general acceptance, till the seventieth year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his ministry. The following is the account of his death in the church records :

“ Jan. 6, 1720. This day ye Revd. Mr. Joseph Gerrish, ye faithful and useful minister of ye place, who was seized with a vertigo a few days since, which quickly turned into something of an apoplectic aspect, departed this life in ye 70th year of his age. He was born at Newbury, March 23, 1650; educated by ye learned and venerable Mr. Thomas Parker; took his degree at Harvard, 1696; preached first at Dover and then at Wenham, May 25, Anno 1673. He came to dwell here July 6th, following, and was solemnly set apart for ye work of the ministry, Jan. 12, Anno Christi 1674-5. This place prospered so (*Deo juvante*) under him, that at his death there were more than three times the number of families, which there were at his first coming to them. He was a person of excellent piety, a gentlemanly spirit, of a singular goodness in his temper, an uncommon example of hospitality, greatly esteemed by all ye towns of ye vicinity, but especially a rare blessing on all accounts, unto this town, where God had stationed him; who at his death, in suitable expressions of honor and sorrow, universally testified yt they looked on him as a holy and righteous man, and a valuable servant of God. His body was decently interred, Tuesday, Jan. 12th, a vast multitude being present to do him honor at his burial.”



We need add nothing to this quaint yet striking testimonial to the character of this excellent man. Under his ministry, nine hundred and eighty-seven persons were baptized, two hundred and thirty-six owned the covenant, and two hundred and thirteen were admitted to full communion with the church. No distinct registry appears to have been preserved of marriages and deaths. Nor was his reputation confined to the immediate scene of his labors. The learned Cotton Mather thus concludes a sermon upon the occasion of his death :

“How can we see the departure of ministers who had a lustre among the righteous, without some sad apprehensions of the glory departing? So much going that was our beauty and our defence, and that cry not be made, ‘My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.’ The cry is heard upon the death of the gracious, humble, faithful Mr. Joseph Gerrish ; a man on many accounts, but especially those of righteousness, more precious than fine gold, than the golden wedge of Ophir ; the useful minister of Wenham, whom a distemper of an apoplectic aspect arresting him as he was near finishing the seventieth year of his age, has newly fetched away to the mansions, which his great Saviour had prepared for him. He is one of the elders who has obtained this good report, that he was a holy and righteous man. A person of excellent piety, one of a gentlemanly as well as relig-



ious disposition; one of a singular goodness and sweetness in his temper; candid, courteous, full of condescension; an uncommon example of hospitality; a singular blessing to the town where God had stationed him, which, under his conduct, became thrice as big as he found it at his first coming to them. And his people at his death, with an universal concurrence in expressions of their love to him, testified some sense thereof, testified what an esteem God had given him in the hearts of those that were acquainted with him. Farewell, O man greatly beloved! May his bereaved flock that had been happy in him for six and forty years, now find the compassion of our Great Shepherd concerned for them.”\*

Mr. Gerrish was buried in the grave-yard, where a reddish stone slab, the inscription upon which has unfortunately become illegible, marks the spot of his resting-place. The town showed their respect for his memory by voting £20 for his funeral expenses, and many years after his death, they

*ben* \* We add, in respect to Mr. Gerrish; the testimony of John Dunstan, Esq., an English gentleman who visited him in 1686. “It were endless to enter on a detail of each faculty of learning Mr. Gerrish is master of, and I therefore take his character in short hand. The philosopher is acute, ingenious and subtle. The divine curious, orthodox and profound. The man of a majestic air without austerity or sourness; his aspect is masterly, yet not imperious or haughty. The Christian is devout without moroseness or starts of holy frenzy or enthusiasm. The preacher is primitive without the occasional colors of whining or cant, and methodical without intricacy or affectation; and, which crowns his character, he is a man of public spirit, zealous for the conversion of the Indians, and of great hospitality to strangers. He gave us a noble dinner, and entertained us with such pleasant fruits as I must own old England is a stranger to. Taking leave of this generous Levite, we thought it high time to prosecute our designed ramble to Ipswich.”

made a generous appropriation to repair the monument over his grave. He left a widow, a daughter of Richard Waldron, Esq., and five children.

Being thus deprived of their spiritual guide, the church, about three weeks after the death of Mr. Gerrish, held a private fast, with the assistance of the Rev. Messrs. Chipman and Prescott. It was voted to appoint a committee of six to supply the pulpit, and also to observe the 10th of February following, as a public fast, "to seek God's face and favor in our bereaved state, and his blessing on our endeavors for a re-settlement, and that the congregation be desired to join with us in the work of said day."

March 15th. The church gave a unanimous call to Rev. Joseph Emerson, to settle with them, which call was concurred in by the town, on the 18th. After some considerable time, Mr. Emerson sent them a letter dated at Boston, July 11th, declining their call. Aug. 20th, the church voted to give a call to Rev. Daniel Perkins, of Charlestown, which was at first agreed to by the town, but at a second meeting an unhappy difference arose about the salary, some wishing to make it £90, while the town would give only £80 a year. Upon this difference of opinion, Mr. Perkins declined to preach any longer at Wenham. The church then engaged Mr. Robert Ward, teacher of the grammar school at Charlestown, to preach for the three ensuing Sabbaths. His first text was Ps. cxix. 113. "Order  
15\*

my steps in thy way." So much were the church and society pleased with these efforts, that they voted unanimously, Oct. 20th, to invite Mr. Ward to be their pastor, offering him £90 annually, in bills of credit or passable money, for his salary, and £100 for his settlement. The following note from the young men of the town, addressed to Mr. Ward, will show the strong impression which his preaching and other services had made upon all classes of people.

"To MR. ROBERT WARD :—

"*Sir* :— We whose names are hereunto subscribed, living in Wenham, and not in a capacity to vote in town concerns, do not only declare our willingness, but also our desire is, that you would be pleased to take up with our church and town's call. And in so doing, we, the subscribers, shall be much obliged therein, and are yours to serve in whatsoever is duty from us to yourself."

Nov. 7, 1720.

James Kembball,	Abraham Kembball,
John Kembball,	John Rogers,
Daniel Kembball,	Paul Kembball,
Thomas Browne,	Daniel Allen,
Zaccheus Goldsmith,	Israel Triker,
Samuel Batchelder,	Josiah White,
Thomas Kembball,	Daniel Fairfield,
Edward Waldron,	Thomas Baker,
John Moulton,	Jeremiah Perkins,
Nathaniel Kembball,	John Dodge,
Joseph Tarbox,	Robert Herrick,
Daniel Claffing,	George Thoping,
Thomas Dodge,	James Rix,
Josiah Kembball.	

Such a testimonial of respect and kind feeling must have been very gratifying to Mr. Ward, and it is not strange that, with such encouragement, the invitation was cheerfully accepted. The following is his letter of acceptance :

*“ To ye much respected, ye committee appointed to notifie to me the call of the church, and ye concurrence of ye congregation at Wenham :*

SIRS :—I have seriously weighed your important call, and have sought direction from Heaven, that, in this great affair, my steps might be ordered according to the Word of God. I have also consulted my fathers in the ministry, who have unanimously advised me to look upon your invitation as a call of Christ, and to comply therewith. Whereupon I do, with the greatest concern and seriousness of mind, accept it as such, engaging, by Divine assistance, to attend, and so far as God shall enable me, to carry on and discharge all the duties of a gospel minister towards this church of Christ ; and I earnestly beg your prayers to God for me, yt He would qualify me daily, more and more, for it ; yt He would direct and enable me by his grace, so to live and so to preach, as becomes a minister of Christ, and one that watches for souls. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer is, yt I may at all times come unto you in ye fullness of the blessings of the gospel of peace, and that my ministry may be a means of turning many to righteousness ; a savour of life unto each of the souls committed unto my charge, whereby I shall have unspeakable joy and they an inconceivable reward in the day of our Lord. I am yours, henceforward, in ye service of ye gospel.

ROBERT WARD.

*Wenham, Nov. 13, 1720.*

Mr. Ward was ordained Jan. 25, 1721. The church in Charlestown, the 1st and 3d churches in

Ipswich, the 2d church in Beverly, and the churches in Topsfield and Manchester, were invited to take part in the council. The church in Charlestown, in consequence of the distance and of illness in the pastor's family, did not come, but sent a high testimonial to the worth and excellent character of the pastor elect. The exercises of the ordination were commenced with prayer, by Mr. Capen, of Topsfield; Mr. Ward preached from 2 Sam. vii. 18. Mr. Rogers, of Ipswich, gave "the awful charge." Mr. Fitch, the right hand of fellowship, and Mr. Wigglesworth closed with prayer. "We sang ye' three last staves of Ps. 132, and Mr. Ward pronounced the blessing."

Feb. 21st was observed as "a day of fasting and prayer, and to renew the solemn covenant with God and one another." Mr. Ward began with prayer, and then preached from Ezra viii. 21. "To seek of him a right way for us." The covenant drawn up by Mr. Gerrish was read, and the assent of the church signified; the brethren signified their assent by holding up their hands, the sisters by rising."

The church appears to have been highly prospered during the entire period of Mr. Ward's ministry. It was voted April 7, 1727, to observe a day of fasting and prayer, in private, to beseech the favor of God upon us, that he would unite our hearts to fear his great name, and that he would vouchsafe the great blessing of early piety to our

children and those who descend from us." These efforts of the church were so successful that within a year of the time, fifty-six were admitted to the church and seventy-five "owned the covenant."

But amidst these proofs of the prosperity of the church and the usefulness and piety of its pastor, we suddenly meet with the record that "Rev. Mr. Ward being sick, a committee was chosen by the town to supply the pulpit, and it was voted to raise £30 for the purpose." Soon after he died, July 19, 1732, in the 38th year of his age, and the eleventh of his ministry. During the ten and one-half years which he served the church in Wenham, two hundred and sixteen persons were baptized, one hundred and eighteen admitted to full communion, seventy-five owned the covenant, fifty-four couples were married, and one hundred and twenty-two died. The town showed their respect for his memory by voting £26 towards his funeral expenses. He was born, as appears from the inscription over his grave, in Charlestown, Sept. 23, 1694, and graduated at Harvard, 1719. He was twice married; first, to Priscilla, daughter of Hon. James Appleton, of Ipswich, who died in 1724, aged twenty-eight years; and secondly, to Margaret, daughter of Daniel Rogers, Esq., of Ipswich, who survived her husband, and died in 1743, aged forty-four years. From the records it appears that she did not unite with the church until after the death of her husband. Both the



wives of Mr. Ward lie by his side in the old part of the burial ground.

Being again deprived of their spiritual head, the church, according to their usual custom, held "a day of prayer and fasting, seriously to implore the direction of Heaven in the choice of another pastor." A committee appointed to seek a candidate, engaged Mr. John Warren to preach for six Sabbaths, at the end of which he received a call from the church and people, to become their pastor. A salary of £130 was offered, with £200 upon his settlement.\* An appropriation of £23 was also made for the expenses of the ordination, which occurred Jan. 12, 1733. The 1st and 3d churches in Ipswich, the two churches in Beverly, and the first three churches in Salem were invited to assist in the exercises of the day. Mr. Prescott, of Salem, opened with prayer, Mr. Wigglesworth, of Ipswich, preached from Heb. xii. 17, "As they that must give an account." Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Ipswich, gave the charge, and Rev. Mr. Fisk, of Salem, the fellowship of the churches. "Two staves of the 132d Psalm" were sung, and the benediction pronounced by the pastor.

"A day of prayer and fasting was held, June 15, 1734, for the revival of religion, that the blessing of God might be on the rising generation." This special effort appears to have been followed by in-

\* This large increase in the amount of salary, above what had previously been given, is to be ascribed to depreciation in the value of the provincial money.



creased religious interest, and a large accession to the church.

In 1737, the town was visited with a terrible epidemic, of which about twenty persons died in the course of three months. Two families lost the entire number of their children, viz., Mr. John Gott and Mr. Richard Dodge; the former of whom lost five and the latter four. A public fast was appointed, to improve this season of affliction. Rev. Mr. Champney preached in the morning, from Jer. ix. 24; Rev. Mr. Chipman, in the afternoon, from Jer. ii. 30. Thus did our forefathers acknowledge the hand of God in the hour of affliction, as well as in the time of prosperity. A powerful revival followed, and within the following year we find that thirty-five persons were united with the church. From the previous accounts it will appear that this church was no stranger to revivals of religion, and accordingly we find them ready to sympathize with such works occurring in other places. About the year 1740, occurred the Great Awakening, as it has been called, under the labors of Whitefield, Edwards and others. After the first generation of Puritans had passed away, religious zeal and interest appeared to decline. Coldness and lethargy very generally prevailed among the churches, and when the new reformation arose, no little opposition was encountered from many distinguished persons, both of the clergy and of the laity. On the other hand, it was as

warmly supported by an assembly of one hundred and thirteen pastors, at a "meeting in Boston, July 7, 1743, occasioned by the late happy Revival of Religion in many parts of the land." Among the names of those present, appears that of Rev. John Warren, pastor of the church at Wenham.

In 1743, "a century lecture" was delivered by Mr. Warren on the hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of the town. This lecture unfortunately appears not to have been preserved. It doubtless contained much interesting and valuable matter respecting the early history of the town, which cannot now be replaced.

Mr. Warren was settled on what appears to have been a liberal salary for the times, yet so fluctuating was the state of the currency that it became necessary repeatedly to make special grants for his maintenance. In 1743, £30 were thus given, and the same the following year; then £70 a year were added to his regular salary for three years. In 1746, the parish voted to give £100 to Mr. Warren in addition to the £130 a year, on which he was settled; the next year, this grant was raised to £170, and in 1748 to £220.

Mr. Warren's health appears to have been for several years rather feeble. He died July 19, 1749, in the 45th year of his age, and the 17th of his ministry. The town supplied the pulpit during his illness, and voted £20 for the expenses of his funeral. He was born at Roxbury, Sept. 18, 1704,

graduated at Cambridge, 1725, began to preach in 1727. His epitaph says of him, that "he was a burning and shining light, beloved of his brethren in the ministry, as well as of his own flock, and deservedly lamented at his death."

Soon after the death of Mr. Warren, the church and town united in the choice of Mr. Samuel Turrell for their pastor. But Providence had not so ordained, for on the 10th of February following, he was removed by death before his answer to the people of Wenham had been given. Under these circumstances, the 9th of May was observed as a day of prayer and fasting. A few days subsequently, Mr. Joseph Swain, of Reading, was unanimously invited to become their pastor; £70 lawful money was offered as a salary, and £133 6s. 8d. granted upon his settlement. The ordination took place Oct. 24, 1750. Rev. Mr. Perkins, of Bridgewater, preached from Deut. viii. 11. Rev. Mr. Wigglesworth, of Ipswich, offered the ordaining prayer and gave the charge, and Mr. Hobby, of Reading, gave the right hand of fellowship.

Soon after the settlement of Mr. Swain, an unfortunate difficulty arose between Mr. Josiah Fairfield and two other members of the church, viz.: Messrs. John Gott and Richard Kimball. The church refused to take it up and declined to join in a mutual council. Mr. Fairfield upon this proceeded to call an *ex parte* council, which met May 15, 1751, first at the house of Mr. Fairfield, and

afterwards at the meeting-house. A committee was appointed by the church to confer with the council. The result of their deliberation was that they advised the church to consider those articles of Mr. Fairfield's complaint which were not involved in the law. An attempt was made to reconcile the parties, which resulted in a confession on the part of Mr. Gott, respecting a portion of the charges against him. The other articles of complaint the church, after a patient hearing, decided to be not sufficiently proved. This investigation continued through several months. The council met again in November, and approved the decision of the church. This, we believe, is the *only* ecclesiastical council ever convened in Wenham for any purpose, except to settle or dismiss a pastor. These difficulties occurring so early in his ministry must have been exceedingly annoying to Mr. Swain, but he appears throughout to have acted with wisdom and firmness. The account which he has given in the records of these troubles, is singularly calm and dispassionate, and his entire course seems to have commanded the respect and approval of his people.

In 1755, a war was commenced with France, though not formally declared till a year later. An expedition was planned against Crown Point upon Lake Champlain, in which the New England Colonies were actively engaged. A regiment was formed in Essex County, of which Mr. Swain was

chosen chaplain. It is probable that he was not long absent, but returned with the close of the season to his parish.

Mr. Swain, as well as his predecessor, suffered much from the fluctuating state of the currency. Various sums were granted to him at different periods by the town, to compensate for the depreciation of his salary— at one time £10, at another £30, at another, £100. During the revolutionary war, the society became so impoverished that the pastor was employed, in addition to his other duties, in teaching the village school, for which service he was to receive £300 in the depreciated currency of the times.

Mr. Swain had the reputation of being the best writer in the Association, though rather a dull speaker. He appears to have been somewhat formal and reserved in his manners, and so did not gain that hold upon the affections of his people that some of his predecessors had acquired. The records speak of his having had difficulties with the church, but of what nature is not now apparent. During the period of his ministry, the country passed through two long and severe wars, the effects of which extended to every town and neighborhood. The minds of men were intensely exercised upon the great events which were transpiring around them. The country was passing through a great transition state. The attention of people was diverted from religious to secular affairs; there

were few conversions, and the ordinances of the church were irregularly administered. On account of ill health Mr. Swain appears not to have preached much for some time before his death, which occurred June 27, 1792, at the age of 71. He had been pastor of this church for forty-two years. During this period over one thousand persons were baptized, five hundred and fifty-three died, one hundred and twenty-seven were admitted to the church, and one hundred and nineteen owned the covenant. His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Forbes, of Gloucester.

A few months afterwards, Rev. Adoniram Judson was invited to take charge of the church and society. A council was convened, consisting of the churches in Chebacco, Ipswich Hamlet, Manchester, and the two churches in Beverly. They met Dec. 26, 1792, and organized by electing Rev. Mr. Cleveland, moderator, and Rev. Mr. Cutler, scribe. "They proceeded regularly and unanimously to the installation of Rev. Mr. Judson, which was done decently, and to the satisfaction and joy of a great concourse of people." About the same time the half-way covenant was abolished, and none admitted to partake of church ordinances, but such as had been admitted to full communion.

Mr. Judson remained in Wenham but a short time. £60 were offered for his settlement, and £95, with the use of the parish lands, as his salary.



Considering this sum insufficient, he soon requested to have it increased, but the town voted unanimously, to make no addition whatever, to his salary. Upon this, Mr. Judson asked a dismissal, which, after some delay, was granted. A council was convened, which resulted in his being dismissed, Oct. 22, 1799. This appears to be the first instance in which an ecclesiastical council assembled in town, for the purpose of dismissing a pastor. Mr. Judson afterwards settled at Plymouth, where he remained till 1817. In his old age he became a Baptist, and died at Scituate, Nov. 26, 1826, aged seventy-six. During the seven years of his ministry in Wenham, twenty-four persons united with the church, twenty-three were baptized, forty-two couples were married, and fifty-two died. A son of his, Rev. Dr. Adoniram Judson, became the distinguished Baptist missionary to Burmah.

After the dismissal of Mr. Judson, the church became much divided, and was for some years destitute of a pastor. Attempts were made to induce several clergymen to settle with them, but without success. At length, in 1805, the choice of both church and people was united upon Rev. Rufus Anderson. Their invitation was accepted, and on the 10th of July, of that year, a council was assembled to perform the services of his installation. The sermon on this occasion was preached by Rev. Dr. Worcester, of Salem, from Eph. i. 23. Dr. Dana, of Ipswich, offered the installing prayer, Dr. Wads-



worth, of Danvers, gave the charge, and Dr Abbott, of Beverly the fellowship of the churches. A salary of \$500 a year was offered to Mr. Anderson—a liberal sum, if we consider the relative expenses of living, and the income of other professions at that time.

The 10th of October following was observed as a day of prayer and fasting, “in remembrance of the late drought, and especially under the judgment of the present prevailing and mortal sickness.” “The day was generally observed; it seemed to be a holy solemnity.”

The next year a new covenant and articles of faith were drawn up by a committee appointed for the purpose, and were approved by a vote of the church. These articles are somewhat lengthy, and treat in considerable detail, of matters of discipline and church government, as well as of principles and doctrines. In an abridged and condensed form, they still constitute the creed and covenant of the church.

Mr. Anderson’s ministry appears to have been generally very acceptable, but failing health soon impeded his activity and usefulness. He died Feb. 11, 1814, of “pulmonic consumption,” from which his health had been gradually declining, for two or three years, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and ninth of his ministry. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Worcester, of Salem, from 2 Tim. i. 12. From it we learn that he was born at Lon-

donderry, N. H., March 5, 1765; graduated at Dartmouth College, 1791; was ordained pastor of the second church in North Yarmouth, Oct. 22, 1794, where he remained about ten years. Dr. Worcester says of him: "Mr. Anderson was possessed of good natural talents, improved by diligence in study, especially in the study of the Holy Writings. His mind was active and efficient, and in regard to objects deemed by him important, would easily kindle into ardor. His passions, naturally quick and strong, restrained and sanctified by Divine grace, diffused around him a mild and benign, a warming and cheering influence." These qualities secured to him the warm attachment of his people, and his ministry was quite successful. While he was over this people, forty persons were added to the church, sixty-seven were baptized, forty-five couples were married, and seventy died. During the latter part of his life, Mr. Anderson was engaged in preparing a history of foreign missions, and employed his son Rufus to assist him in the work. The latter, now senior secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, thus became interested in that cause to which his life has since been devoted.

A committee was appointed to supply the desk, upon Mr. Anderson's death, and several candidates were successively employed. A call was given by the town, in 1815, to Mr. Ebenezer Hubbard, but the church refused to concur. Much division and

dissension ensued. June 20, 1816, the town instructed the committee not to employ any other candidate but Mr. Hubbard. A part wished to employ him till the money raised for the year, which was only \$200, should be exhausted. Mr. Hubbard at length left, and was soon after settled at Middleton. In August, 1817, the church and town agreed to invite Rev. John Smith to become their pastor, which invitation was accepted, and he was accordingly installed November 26th of the same year. His stay here, however, was short. Two years after coming to Wenham, he received the appointment of Professor of Theology, at Bangor. A council was called September 8, 1819, to consider the subject of his dismissal, and after much consideration recommended that he should accept the appointment thus offered, and that his pastoral relation with this church should be dissolved. Only one person joined the church while he was here, one was baptized, nine couples were united in marriage, and eleven died. Mr. Smith remained at Bangor till his death, in 1831. He was a man of strong logical powers, which were cultivated almost to the neglect of taste and imagination. He labored under an impediment in his speech, and did not excel in those graces of manner and style, which are so essential to the popular preacher. His people, however, seem to have been united in him during his stay, and after he left were ready to agree in their efforts to obtain another pastor.

Rev. Ebenezer P. Sperry was very soon employed as a candidate, and within three months received a call to settle, and was accordingly installed, March 20, 1820. The sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. French, of Northampton, N. H., from Romans x. 1. Rev. Mr. Stearns, of Bedford, offered the installing prayer; Dr. Wadsworth, of Danvers, gave the charge, and Rev. Mr. Oliphant, of Beverly, the right hand of fellowship.

The first record of a Sabbath school appears under Mr. Sperry, although it is stated that a school had been commenced as early as 1818, under Mr. Smith. April 20, 1822, the church stopped after a preparatory lecture, to make arrangements for opening the school. "It was agreed that the church should be considered an organized body to patronize and superintend it." At first it was held only during the summer months, but it was soon extended through the year, and considered second in importance and usefulness only, to the stated worship of the sanctuary.

In 1826, the labors of Mr. Sperry were rewarded by a revival of great interest and usefulness. For fifteen years subsequent to 1810, only thirteen persons had united with the church, which thus became much reduced in numbers, while most of its members were aged and infirm. In these discouraging circumstances, "a day was set apart for fasting and prayer by the church and people, to supplicate the continuance of the gracious influences

of the Holy Spirit." Their prayers were answered, and within a year fifty-nine persons were added to the church by profession.

A Baptist church was organized October 12, 1831, in the east part of the town, and John Hood and Charles Holden, with their wives, were dismissed to join it.

Mr. Sperry's ministry appears to have been very successful. During the seventeen years of his pastorate, one hundred and twenty-three persons were united with the church; one hundred and fifty-four were baptized; eighty couples were married, and one hundred and ninety-two connected with the society, died. By his own request, he was dismissed, April 30, 1837. After leaving Wenham, he served as chaplain of the House of Correction, at South Boston, and subsequently, removed to Ohio, where he was installed pastor of a church, and remained in the active discharge of his ministerial duties till his death, which occurred quite suddenly, January 1, 1853. He was born in New Haven, Conn., June 3, 1785; graduated at Middlebury College, in 1808; was ordained at Dunstable, N. H., November 3, 1813; died at Lyme, Huron Co., Ohio, at the age of sixty seven.

Shortly after Mr. Sperry's dismissal, a unanimous call was extended to Mr. Daniel Mansfield, to become the pastor of this church and people. The invitation was accepted, and accordingly he was ordained July 26, 1837. The sermon on this occa-

sion, was preached by Rev. Dr. Woods, of Andover, from 1 Timothy iv. 12; ordaining prayer by Rev. Dr. Crowell, of Essex; charge by Rev. Dr. Emerson, of Salem; right hand of fellowship by Rev. Mr. Fitz, of Ipswich; charge to the people by Rev. Mr. Park, of South Danvers.

Mr. Mansfield is so well remembered by many who knew him, that it is hardly necessary to speak at length, of the events of his ministry. He appears to have possessed good talents and sound judgment, while his modesty, gentleness and fidelity, won for him the respect and affection of his people. Upon the second centennial anniversary of the organization of the church, he delivered two historical discourses, which were afterwards published, and evince careful preparation, and considerable research. Another discourse of his, preached at the dedication of the new meeting-house, at Wenham, December 20, 1843, was also published. His health, which was never robust, gradually declined, and on the 8th of April, 1847, he died in the midst of his people, in the fortieth year of his age, and the eleventh of his ministry. During his pastorate, sixty-one were added to the church by profession and twelve by letter; eighty-eight were baptized; seventy-one couples united in marriage, and ninety-three persons died within the limits of the society. Mr. Mansfield was born at Lynnfield, August 8, 1807; made a profession of religion in 1826; graduated at Amherst, in 1833; was ordain-



ed over the church at Wenham, July 26, 1837, and died April 8, 1847. His remains were buried in our cemetery, with the former pastors of the church. A neat monument was erected over his grave, by the members of his parish, inscribed with an affectionate testimonial to his worth.

The church remained vacant until October 27th, of the same year, when Mr. Jeremiah Taylor was ordained and installed as its pastor. Mr. Taylor commenced preaching in Wenham, August 1st, and continued to supply until his ordination. The sermon was by Rev. O. A. Taylor, of Manchester; ordaining prayer by Rev. Dr. Dana; charge to the pastor by Rev. Dr. Crowell, of Essex; charge to the people by Rev. T. A. Taylor, of Slatersville, R. I.; fellowship of the churches by Rev. R. Taylor, of N. J.; the sermon and other exercises of the occasion were printed, and are in the hands of many of our people.

Of Mr. Taylor as a man, a citizen, and a minister of the gospel, it is unnecessary to speak. During his ministry of nearly nine years, twenty-two persons were admitted to the church by profession, and fourteen by letter; twenty-six infants were baptized, and fifty-three couples united in marriage.

In July, 1856, Mr. Taylor received a call to become the pastor of the first Congregational church and society in Middletown, Conn., and at his request, a council was convened August 19th, to consider the question of his dismissal. This council,



of which Rev. S. M. Worcester, D. D., of Salem, was Moderator, and Rev. J. B. Sewall, of Lynn, Scribe; after a careful investigation of the subject, voted by a small majority, "that it is expedient that the pastoral relation of Rev. J. Taylor be and hereby is dissolved. As an expression of their personal feelings, the Council deem it sufficient to say that, in their unanimous judgment, the resolution adopted at the meeting of the Parish on the 16th, is worthy of entire confidence." This resolution was as follows:

*Resolved*, "That it is the earnest and sincere desire of the members of this Society that the Rev. Mr. Taylor shall continue our pastor; that we will do all in our power to render the connection happy and prosperous, and that while we deeply regret the object of the meeting, we cannot let the occasion pass without bearing our united testimony to the most faithful discharge of all his ministerial and parochial duties; and especially to the eminent ability, the true Christian spirit and fidelity manifested by him in preaching to us the word of God; and to the unimpeachable character he has sustained in all the walks of life during his settlement with us."

The church at the time of Mr. Taylor's departure, Sept. 1, 1856, numbered one hundred and eighteen members, of whom thirty-eight were males, and eighty were females. The contributions for various benevolent objects the year previous, amounted to \$330.00. The Sabbath School at the same time contained about two hundred scholars, under the care of twenty-four teachers. The School has a

well selected library of over three hundred volumes.

After Mr. Taylor's dismissal, the church remained for nearly three years without a pastor. In July, 1858, an invitation was extended by the church and parish to Mr. John S. Sewall, then a student in the theological seminary at Bangor, to settle with them in the work of the ministry. The invitation was accepted and arrangements were made for his ordination in the following autumn, but in consequence of the sudden and severe illness of the candidate, his coming to Wenham was deferred till Spring. Mr. Sewall's health was at length so far restored that he was ordained as pastor of the church and society, April 20, 1859. The sermon on this occasion was preached by Rev. J. B. Sewall, of Lynn, a brother of the candidate; the ordaining prayer was made by his father, Rev. J. Sewall, of Granville, N. Y.; the charge was given by Rev. Dr. Worcester, of Salem, Moderator of the Council; the right hand of fellowship was given by Rev. J. O. Murray, of South Danvers; and the address to the people by Rev. I. E. Dwinell, of Salem. The exercises of the occasion were solemn and impressive. May the connection thus auspiciously begun, long continue to be a source of abundant blessings to both pastor and people.

The present meeting-house is the fourth which has been built by this church and society. The first, which was probably designed to be merely

temporary, stood near the house now occupied by Mr. H. Tarr. The road then passed from the Pond along a valley somewhat to the east of the present road where it now lies, and was carried directly over the eminence upon which the church was built, and nearly over the spot now occupied by the town house. In 1663, a new church was built, "twenty-four feet square, and twelve feet stud," which, with various alterations and enlargements, continued to be occupied till 1748. Here all the town meetings and public assemblies were held, and at times it appears also to have been occupied as a school room. The house was afterwards enlarged and repaired. Before the church at Ipswich Hamlet was formed in 1714, many of the inhabitants of what is now Hamilton, were in the habit of attending worship in Wenham, and one-third of the house belonged to them. This third was estimated at the time they withdrew, to be worth £39 11s. 6d., which would make the value of the whole house about \$400.

There appears to have been no pews in this house. The inhabitants were seated strictly according to their supposed rank. This seating of the meeting-house was a subject of frequent wrangling and jealousy. It was usually left to the selectmen, but was often also devolved upon a committee specially chosen for the purpose. The rules according to which the rank of different individuals was determined, are not preserved in

our records, but they were probably much the same as those adopted by the neighboring town of Beverly, a few specimens of which I beg leave to quote :

“ That every male be allowed one degree for every complete year of age he exceeds twenty-one.

“ That he be allowed for a captain’s commission twelve degrees, for a lieutenant’s, eight degrees, and for an ensign’s, four degrees.

“ That he be allowed three degrees for every shilling of real estate in the last parish tax, and one degree for every shilling for personal estate and faculty.

“ Every six degrees for estate and faculty of a parent alive to make one degree among his sons, or where there are no sons, among the daughters that are seated.

“ Every generation of predecessors heretofore living in this town to make one degree for every male descendant that is seated. That parentage be regarded no farther otherwise than to turn the scale between competition for the same seat.

“ That some suitable abatement in degrees be made where it is well known that the person is greatly in debt.

“ Married women to be seated agreeable to the rank of their husbands, and widows in the same degree as though their husbands were living.

“ That the foremost magistrate seat ( so called )

shall be the highest in rank, and the other three in successive order."

The women were seated separately from the men, while the children were crowded into the galleries and upon the stairs, or wherever they could find a vacant place. The care of looking after these juveniles was devolved upon the tythingmen, one of whom used to sit among them to restrain their mischievous propensities.

This practice of seating the congregation according to their supposed property and rank, may seem very strange to our ideas of republican equality, but it was perfectly in accordance with the public sentiment of those times. Our ancestors, while jealous and tenacious to the last degree of their own rights, were always ready to render all due homage to the rights and claims of their superiors. While the seats were free to all, some arrangement must, of course, have been adopted to secure harmony among their occupants. The plan of seating the house was strictly agreeable to the spirit of the age, which allowed the precedence on all public occasions to magistrates and men of age and respectability.

In 1747, a vote of the town was obtained to build a new meeting-house, and a committee of nine persons, viz. : Mr. John Gott, Richard Dodge, John Kimball, Benjamin Edwards, Josiah Herrick, Ebenezer Waldron, Nathaniel Bragg, Edmund Kimball, and Caleb Coye, was appointed to superintend



the work, but the season being late, the whole matter was deferred till the next Spring. It was then determined to take down the old meeting-house, and to make the new one "fifty-two feet long, forty-two feet wide, and twenty-four feet stud." A committee was moreover appointed, consisting of Dea. Jonathan Kimball, Jonathan Porter, and William Dodge, to provide at the expense of the town for the day of the raising "six gallons of rum, eight pounds of sugar, two barrels of cider, two barrels of beer, one hundred weight of bread, one hundred weight of legs of pork, and forty pounds of cheese. to be taken care of by said committee in ye prudentest way they can for the end aforesaid; which drink and provision," (the record goes on to say) "was provided by the town on the above said 2nd day of June, 1748." They then proceeded to finish the house and build the galleries and steeple. It was next voted to make twenty-four pews around the wall of the house on the lower floor, and to sell them at auction to the highest bidders. Subsequently twelve additional pews were constructed, "six in front and three on each end of the body of the seats, to be five feet in depth, and to have an alley of three feet between them and the wall pews." The galleries and the principal part of the body of the house, however, still continued to be free, and a committee for assigning to each one his appropriate seat, continued to be appointed till a period considerably later.

The business of building the meeting-house was at length completed, but not till twenty-two town meetings had been held in reference to the subject. A steeple was erected and a bell procured; but in 1759, we find a vote "to pull down the steeple to the meeting-house, to save the house, and to close up that part of the roof where it stood." In those days, however, when clocks were scarce and the people depended for their time very much on the ringing of the bell, the want of a steeple was much felt; and accordingly we find that after a few years it was voted "to build a steeple twelve feet square, and of a proportional height, and that the committee be empowered to provide a vane to be upon the top of said steeple, according to their discretion." £1351 6s. 8d. were allowed for the labor and materials of this work, but it was obviously in a depreciated currency, since it was three times the sum appropriated twelve years before for building the entire house.

The free seats in the house were afterwards removed, and their place supplied by the old-fashioned square, high backed pews, with their leaning boards and hinge seats; an arrangement by which a part of the congregation were compelled to turn their backs upon the speaker. Provision was made at the west end of the house for separate seats for the negroes, a few of whom were owned by different individuals in town. In 1756, the number of this class increasing, a vote



was passed that these seats should be lengthened. The singing was, for a long time, performed by the whole congregation, one of the deacons reading the hymn line by line, and then often acting as chorister, while every one according to his ability joined by rote, but in time and measure not always the most harmonious. The first innovation upon this ancient practice seems to have been made in 1770, when "the two hind seats on the womens' side, on the lower floor, were turned into a pew to accommodate the singers." This arrangement, however, did not prove satisfactory; accordingly the next year "the singers' pew was sold, and a seat made for them in the gallery." The advantages of this plan were so obvious that the choir has ever since retained the position then assigned to them.

For more than a hundred years the Bay Psalm Book, containing the ancient and rugged version of Sternhold and Hopkins, continued to be used in the sanctuary. To our ears its measures seem rude and inharmonious, but to the stern old puritan, "the concord of sweet sounds" was altogether a secondary consideration. He looked beyond the mere forms of expression, to the lofty sentiments which they conveyed. Those strains were hallowed to his ears by the associations of youth, and by the continued use of his riper years. It is not strange therefore that the introduction of a new version, and the formation of a choir were long

and strenuously resisted. Like all real improvements, however, they were at length approved, and Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns were, by a vote of the town, May 1771, "introduced into the congregation to be sung on the Lord's day." We can find but one other vote in reference to sacred music, and that was an appropriation of \$30 for this purpose, which was made in 1827. Since then the support of singing has been left to private efforts and contributions.

The steeple to this meeting-house, which had already been once taken down, was destined to cause still further trouble. In 1797, £100 were raised for repairing it, under the superintendence of Capt. Pelatiah Brown, Richard Hood, and Isaac Porter. The next year, \$150 were appropriated for the purchase of a new bell, the old bell having been sold, and the money added to the previous sum. But troubles were not to end here. The new built steeple was blown down by a great gale, in the year 1815. Its place was supplied by a square tower of considerably less height, which was thus less exposed to the fury of the winds.

This house continued to stand until Oct., 1843, or a little more than ninety-five years from its erection. In a sermon preached on the occasion of leaving it, by Rev. Daniel Mansfield, he remarked that it had been opened for public worship nearly five thousand Sabbaths, and that more than ten thousand sermons had been preached within its

walls, while all who aided in its erection, and all who first heard the gospel from its desk, had gone the way of all the earth.

The new meeting-house was placed a little in the rear of the place occupied by the previous one, and was rather larger in size, being sixty feet in length by forty-five in width. It was built by Mr. T. P. Dodge, at a cost of \$4000. A sermon preached on the occasion of entering the new house by Rev. Mr. Mansfield, was published by the Society.

In consequence of the increase of the population, it was resolved in 1853, to enlarge the house, which was done by increasing its length fifteen feet. It is now a neat and well proportioned edifice, and will seat a congregation of six hundred quite comfortably. An organ was procured in 1852, by private contribution, which adds greatly to the interest of the performances of the choir.

A lot of land had been purchased by the parish so long ago as 1725, for the use of the pastor. A vote of the town passed in 1840, authorized the sale of this lot, the proceeds of which, together with a donation of \$500 from Edmund Kimball, Esq., of Newburyport, and other contributions from various individuals, were appropriated to building a parsonage. This house was afterwards found to be inconvenient and not well suited for such a purpose, and was therefore sold. A lot of ground was selected opposite to the church and more

retired from the street, on which the present parsonage was built in 1848, at a cost of \$2,500. It is pleasantly located on a little eminence, removed from the noise and bustle of the village, and is admirably adapted to be the study and home of a country pastor. The grounds around are set out with trees, which, when they are fully grown, will render the spot truly delightful; altogether, few parishes have a parsonage so pleasant and inviting.

Liberty was granted by the town, for the parish to build a vestry on the common, with a lease of the spot for a period of twenty years. A neat one story building was accordingly erected, which previous to building the town house, was used for public meetings, lectures, &c. More recently it has been removed to a spot owned by the parish, on the north side of the church, and elegantly fitted up with settees, &c., adapting it well for evening meetings and other purposes for which it was intended.

The following persons have filled the office of Deacon in this church :

Elected.

James Moulton.....	Dec. 31, 1674.
✓ William Fisk.....	Feb. 27, 1679.
James Friend.....	Jan. 8, 1703.
Ephraim Kimball.....	July 18, 1716.
John Friend.....	Mar. 7, 1718.
Daniel Dodge.....	Feb. 11, 1729.
Wm. Fairfield.....	Sept. 16, 1731.

	Elected.
Ebenezer Fisk.....	May 16, 1739.
Jonathan Kimball.....	Nov. 26, 1742.
Ebenezer Fisk.....	1751.
Jonathan Kimball.....	Mar., 1758.
Ebenezer Waldron.....	Mar. 24, 1758.
Samuel Tarbox.....	Dec. 26, 1760.
John Friend.....	Oct. 30, 1777.
Caleb Kimball.....	Oct. 30, 1779.
Stephen Dodge.....	May 26, 1786.
William Dodge.....	Oct. 4, 1805.
John Dodge.....	April 11, 1806.
Nathaniel Kimball.....	Nov. 14, 1826.
Moses Foster.....	Jan. 4, 1827.
Abram Patch.....	Mar. 27, 1834.
Stephen Dodge.....	April, 1857.

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## THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

The history of the Baptist denomination in Massachusetts has been as yet but very imperfectly written, and still presents a rich and inviting field for some future historian. Individuals of this denomination appeared in Boston and Salem soon after the foundation of the colony. It was no part of the original design of the Puritans to found an asylum for every sect and opinion. Their great object was to establish a religious commonwealth. The wilderness was as open to others as it had been to them, but in the territory which they occupied, they were not disposed to have their grand experiment interfered with by the presence

or preaching of those of different religious sentiments. No resource was left to persons of other sects but to return to England, or to found colonies for themselves. Accordingly for more than a century, the Baptists were very much confined to Rhode Island. In later times, they were permitted to reside in Massachusetts, and those who were enrolled as members of their societies, were excused from the tax, which, till 1833, was imposed on the population generally, for the support of the Congregational ministry. Until a recent period, all the churches of the Baptist denomination in New England, were embraced in one Association, and old men still tell of their journeys to its annual meetings, which were usually held in Rhode Island.

Amidst the various changes which have come over the face of society since the Revolution, this denomination has been much increased. Near the close of the last century, Miss Rebecca Goldsmith, a young lady from Haverhill, but connected with some families in this town, was employed as a teacher in the Neck District, and by her zeal and earnestness, persuaded several persons to embrace her religious principles. For several years, they attended the Baptist Society in Danversport, which appears to have been the parent of most of this denomination, in this part of Essex County. A church was formed in Beverly, March 8th, 1801, with which the Baptist families in Wenham, for many years, regularly worshipped. Meetings, how-



ever, were often held among themselves, and their numbers gradually increased. In 1826, the town was blessed with a revival, which added considerably to their strength, and it was at length resolved to make an effort to organize an independent society. A new and convenient meeting-house was erected about two miles east of the Congregational Church, by Mr. Joseph Edwards. It was fifty-one feet in length by thirty-eight feet in width, and is surmounted by a tower and steeple, with a bell. It presents a neat appearance, and was erected at a cost of about \$2000.

An ecclesiastical council was convened Oct. 12, 1826, by which twenty-five persons, (eleven males and fourteen females) who had been dismissed from the first Baptist Church in Beverly, were constituted into the Baptist Church of Wenham. The names of its original members were as follows :

- 1.—Dea. Nicholas Dodge,
- 2.—Dea. Richard Dodge,
- 3.—Nicholas Dodge, Jr.,
- 4.—Asa B. Edwards,
- 5.—Ezra Edwards,
- 6.—Benjamin Edwards,
- 7.—William Dodge,
- 8.—William Dodge, 3rd,
- 9.—William P. Dodge,
- 10.—David Dodge,
- 11.—Richard Dodge, Jr.

- 1.—Hannah Dodge,
- 2.—Hannah Dodge, 2nd,
- 3.—Jerusha Edwards,
- 4.—Prudence Langstol,
- 5.—Hannah Edwards, 3rd,
- 6.—Anna Norris,
- 7.—Elizabeth Caswell,
- 8.—Lucy Dodge,
- 9.—Prudence Dodge,
- 10.—Lydia Dodge,
- 11.—Sukey Dodge,
- 12.—Nancy Dodge,
- 13.—Mary Edwards,
- 14.—Mary Edwards, 2d.

The same day, the new house was consecrated by solemn and appropriate services to the worship of God. Several persons were about this time

dismissed from the Congregational Society to join the new church, which was increased within a year by letter and by profession to forty-eight members, most of whom resided in the vicinity of the meeting-house.

The first minister of this society was the Rev. Charles Miller, a native of Scotland, who supplied from April 4, 1833, until April 9, 1835. He was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Archibald, whose pastoral relation was dissolved August 3, 1837. He was followed by the Rev. Joel Kenney, a graduate of Bowdoin College, who was ordained June 20, 1838, and was dismissed May 24, 1840. The church was then destitute for more than a year, but at length succeeded in obtaining the services of Rev. George W. Patch, a graduate of Newton Theological Seminary, who was ordained Oct. 20, 1841. He was a young man of talent and energy, and in a short time having received a call by the Baptist church in Marblehead to become their pastor, he was, at his own request, dismissed Feb. 27, 1843.

The church remained without a pastor until 21st of December, when Mr. Josiah Keely, a native of England, but for some years a resident in this country, was ordained over it to the work of the ministry. His pastorate continued for a period of nine years, during which both the church and society enjoyed an unusual degree of peace and prosperity. He was a man of talent, earnestness,

and a truly Christian spirit. His candor, and enlightened views and courteous manners secured him the respect and esteem of many who were not members of his society. As a member and for a while chairman of the School Committee, and as a supporter of every good cause and good work, he was known and esteemed by all the inhabitants of the town. He especially delighted and gloried in the name and office of peace-maker. The prosperity of the society under his charge abundantly proves the advantage of permanency in the pastoral relation. He was dismissed at his own request, Nov. 4, 1852, and removed to Saco, in Maine, where he is now settled.

His place was supplied on the March succeeding by Rev. Isaac Woodbury, a native of Hamilton, whose ministry and labors are too recent and too well remembered to need any description here. After a pastoral connection of a little more than two years, he was dismissed at his own request, Aug. 27, 1855, to remove to the West.

The church did not long remain destitute. On the 1st of January following, Mr. Thomas Womersly, a native of England, but a graduate of Newton Theological Seminary, and for many years a resident in this country, accepted the invitation of the society and church to become their pastor, to which office he was ordained, February 20, 1856. The sermon on this occasion was preached by Rev. N. M. Williams, of Somerville; the ordaining prayer

was made by Rev. Mr. Knight, of Beverly; the charge to the pastor, by Rev. C. W. Redding; Fellowship of the Churches, by Rev. Mr. Chaffin, of Danvers. Address to the people by Rev. G. W. Patch, of Marblehead. The exercises were appropriate and solemn, and the occasion one of much interest.

Mr. Womersly continues to be the faithful, industrious and generally beloved pastor of this people. Under his ministry the church, notwithstanding severe losses by the death of some of its most valued members, has been on the whole prosperous, and its numbers have been considerably increased, although the number of inhabitants in the east part of the town has received but little increase, the church has always maintained a vigorous life, and has doubtless been a blessing to the people among whom it is located. At the present time, it numbers seventy-six members, twenty-three of whom have been added within the last year.

The following letter, addressed by the church to the Salem Baptist Association, and which, by the kindness of the Pastor and Clerk, I am allowed to copy, will indicate better than I could otherwise do, the present state and prospects of this society. It also gives a sketch worthy of preservation of a revival which had been recently experienced.

*“ To the Salem Baptist Association:*

DEAR BRETHREN,—

Our last annual letter to you gave no indication of outward prosperity; it told you that we were desponding, anxious, and fearful; and yet that we were endeavoring to be faithful in

labors for the descent of God's converting grace. This year we send greetings with thankful and rejoicing hearts, for the Lord hath visited us and greatly blessed us.

The first day of January last, the day set apart by the Association for special prayer for a revival of religion in the churches, was observed by us in the manner suggested; and it was a day most profitable to us. Previous to that, we had seen cheering evidences of the workings of God's spirit upon the minds of the increased numbers who attended our meetings. But on that day we were permitted not only to see a decided yielding to the Spirit's power on the part of unbelievers, but also to hear from one who had found the pardoning mercy of God. From this time the work of the Lord gradually extended, and converts increased to a greater number than had ever been known in any former revival in the history of our church. Of this number there have already been baptized and added to our church twenty-three.

But together with this great occasion for encouragement and joy, we have suffered unusual and most serious losses. which have caused us to mourn. Four of our members have died during the past year. Two of these had been of the few real burden-bearers in the church, ever active, deeply interested, and self-sacrificing. May their virtues and usefulness enrich the characters of their children, who yet remain with us.

Our statistics are as follows:—

Baptized.....	23
Added by letter.....	0
Dismissed.....	4
Excluded.....	0
Died.....	4
<hr/>	
Total number.....	76

We have contributed to benevolent objects as follows:

To the Baptist Missionary Union.....	\$16.00
“ Free Mission Society.....	2.75
“ Home Missionary Society.....	8.75
“ American and Foreign Bible Society.....	13.75
“ New England Education Society.....	21.75
“ Baptist Church in Rockport.....	12.00
“ Baptist Church in Leavenworth, Kansas.....	5.00
Total.....	<hr/> \$80.00

Our contribution to the Massachusetts Baptist Charitable Society, is \$4.20.

During the past summer we have greatly improved our house of worship by remodeling the pews, papering the walls, and by sundry other improvements.

This letter was adopted by our church, Oct. 10, 1858.

THOMAS WOMERSLY, *Pastor*,

JOHN W. CURTIS, *Clerk.*”

The Sabbath School, that most essential auxiliary to the church in the religious instruction of the young, has been observed by this society from its foundation. Indeed, before the church was organized, we are informed that the children of the neighborhood were often gathered for instruction in the Scriptures. The School appears at the present time to be in a flourishing condition. The annual report to the Sabbath School Convention of the Salem Baptist Association, held in June 1859, reports increasing interest in the teachers' meetings, and Sunday School Concerts which are regularly observed and regarded as important aids in the great work of religious instruction. The



present number of scholars is one hundred and eight, of teachers fourteen, while fourteen members of the school have been added to the church during the past year by baptism. The library contains a selection of two hundred and ninety-five volumes. The report speaks also of renewed efforts and higher aspirations for the future.

Soon after the formation of the church, the want of a parsonage for the residence of the pastor began to be sensibly felt. A special effort was therefore made, and a neat and comfortable house two stories high, and a little removed from the main road, was erected at a cost of about \$1500. It has a quiet and pleasant location, well adapted to be the residence and study of a country clergyman.\*

The following persons have filled the office of Deacon in this society :

Nicholas Dodge.....	Oct. 26, 1831.
Richard Dodge.....	Oct. 26, 1831.
Benjamin Edwards.....	

\* For much of the information contained in the preceding sketch of the Baptist Church and Society, the author has been indebted to Rev. Thomas Womersly its pastor, Mr. J. Choate, and others of the members.

## CONCLUSION.

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I have thus endeavored to trace the history of the town from its rude beginnings in 1639, to the present time. The materials for this purpose have been very imperfect, and have required to be gathered from various and diverse sources. Much that would have been exceedingly interesting has been lost. It is possible that some existing sources of information may have been over-looked, but it is believed that no important facts have been omitted. The path has been through a thick and tangled wilderness, and where no previous pioneers have traversed the ground to clear up the underbrush and prepare the way. In many cases it has been possible only to give the merest outline of events as they occurred, leaving the filling up of the picture to the reader's imagination. Those who have ever engaged in similar researches will appreciate the results of such labors; and no others are competent to judge of the wearisome toil of ransacking musty archives, decyphering scarcely legible manuscripts, digging and delving through heaps of decaying fragments to gather here and there a gem from the accumulated rubbish of ages.

In reviewing the centuries which are past, we cannot fail to be struck with the changes that have come over the state of society, as well as the face of external nature. The primeval forest no longer spreads its dense and interminable shadows. The scarcely traceable footpath has give place to numerous and well constructed highways ; where late the wolf howled and the wild deer bounded, the iron horse now screams and snorts along his narrow track. The rude huts of the early settlers have been replaced by neat and elegant dwellings, the abodes of comfort and even luxury, while fruitful fields and blooming gardens have sprung up as by magic, where two hundred years ago was only a waste and desolate wilderness.

Nor less marked has been the change in the world of life. The Indian, whose canoe once skimmed these placid lakes, whose war-whoop and death song once echoed through these forests, has long since disappeared. The early settlers, those fearless men, whose strong arms and sturdy blows hewed down the forests and planted beside their homes the church and the school-house, as auguries of a brighter coming day—

“ Now all beneath the turf are laid,  
Whereon they lived and toiled and prayed.”

Seven generations have cultivated these fields, and made their homes upon these hills and beside these streams ; have here lived out their little span, and then gone to their final rest. In the long and

tedious struggle with an inhospitable climate and a barren soil ; in the desperate and bloody conflicts with the Indians ; in the contest for freedom and independence ; in the rise and progress of our present national prosperity and happiness ; throughout all these scenes of trial, misfortune, discouragement and final triumph, they have nobly and manfully performed their part. They have left us the fair inheritance which we now enjoy, and examples of patience, fortitude and heroism, of which any nation might well be proud.

The errors of the Puritans have been often made the subjects of unmerited ridicule and censure. We do not approve, nor even wish to apologize for all their acts. We admit the absurdity of much in their manners, and the gloomy appearance of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that they were sometimes bigoted, intolerant, and superstitious. But these were the faults of their age, increased, perhaps, by the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed. Their heroism was nursed in frost and famine, and in frequent struggles with the unscrupulous and ever watchful savages. Hence the severe discipline of their lives and the austerity and precision of their manners. Stern wrestlers with the powers of nature and the dark forms of evil, they scorned to indulge in the refinements and luxuries of life. The elegancies and courtesies of the drawing-room could scarcely be expected of men struggling for a bare subsistence in the inhospitable wilderness.

It has often been made a matter of reproach that while they were themselves fugitives from persecution in England, they in their turn scourged and imprisoned heretics and quakers in this country. In partial apology, it may be urged that the conduct of the latter was often such as would provoke, even in our day, at least a strait jacket, and the restraints of a lunatic asylum. When men and women entered the sanctuary without a vestige of clothing (as some of the quakers did) under the pretence of testifying against the spiritual nakedness of the people, we cannot wonder that severe measures were taken to check and restrain them.

The bigotry and intolerance of the Puritans arose from the intensity of their religious convictions. They were in earnest in seeking the salvation of their souls. And when they beheld the propagation of doctrines which they conceived to be false and pernicious, they felt it to be their duty to interpose the strong arm of power. In this course they erred, for thought cannot be fettered, and the attempt to do it only provokes renewed rebellion. But they acted sincerely according to the light they had, and should be judged according to the spirit and opinion of their times. Their faults were the faults of their age ; their virtues were all their own. Believing as they did in the existence and power of evil spirits, it is not strange that their sombre imaginations should have peopled the dark recesses of the forest with their presence and

agency; or attributed to their influence the novel and unaccountable manifestations of disease. These errors they shared with the profoundest philosophers and wisest statesmen of their day. I have adverted to the fact that four Wenham men were upon the jury, which tried the cases of witchcraft in this county, and that Thomas Fisk, the patriarch of the town, was their foreman. We wonder at their superstition; but in this age of Millerism, and Mormonism, and Spiritual Rappings, have we much right to blame or ridicule our forefathers?

We boast of our liberality and enlightenment, but let us beware lest we mistake indecision and indifference for liberality and toleration in religious things. Let us remember, "that if controversy is a sign of imperfect development or distempered action, indifference, whether in philosophy or religion, is death." Christianity has never assumed the attitude of compromise; it has never aimed to establish a patchwork alliance of right and wrong, of truth and error. While therefore we renounce the application of force, and allow to every one the utmost freedom of conscience, let us hold fast the love of truth with a sincerity and devotion not inferior to that of our noble forefathers.

The history of Wenham has not been marked by any great and striking events, nor even by any startling incidents. The changes which have been described have resulted from the slow and silent progress of time. They have been effected by



those gradual and scarcely perceptible, yet mighty influences which are often unnoticed by the common observer and even by the historian, but which are yet most powerful in determining the destinies of individuals and communities, as well as of nations.

The inhabitants of this town have been characterized by industry, prudence, and love of order. They have generally been cautious and frugal, rather than bold and enterprising. Thus while they have not shared largely in the gains of speculation, they have been free from its losses and reverses. It has also been characteristic of them in former times to live soberly and peaceably. Religious quarrels have been seldom known. Cases of litigation have been so few and unimportant that no member of the legal profession has ever thought it worth while to take up his abode here. In old times, vagabonds and worthless characters from abroad were often warned from town. "So far as we can learn," says Rev. D. Mansfield, "no one of the original settlers, or of their descendents, has ever been charged with a capital crime, and no citizen of Wenham has ever been a tenant of a state prison."

The generations who have lived here before us were a strictly pious people, blending the religious sentiment with all their purposes and actions. In times of trial and calamity, they resorted to fasting and prayer. They loved the house of God. The Sabbath was to them a day of sacred rest, and

observed with a strictness and severity now almost unknown. And they diligently trained up their children to follow in their footsteps and to imitate their example.

We boast that we are better than our fathers, and as a people, we are undoubtedly more numerous and wealthy, more intelligent and refined. But have we more of the elements of real life, of energy, and of heroism? Could we endure the trials which they endured, and come out of them so little scathed? With more of elegance and polish have we not lost something of their stern virtue, and rugged native strength. In the progress of luxury and refinement, let us beware that we depart not too much from the simplicity, earnestness, and intensity of faith and action, which characterized our fathers.

A feeling of profound melancholy naturally steals over the mind in perusing the names and actions of those, who once lived and labored like us, but whose only memorial is now contained in the scarcely legible and fast decaying pages of our records. Our fathers where are they? The early settlers of the town and all who were conspicuous in the first century and a half of its history, are sleeping in the grave.

Thus generation follows generation, while in turn each lives and bustles,

“ And struts and frets its hour upon the stage,  
And then—is seen no more.”

In a few years we too shall be with them, while another generation shall move over these grounds and occupy our places.

Yet the general lesson of history is not that of despondency and gloom. From the earliest settlement of Wenham till the present time, we believe there has been a steady course of progress and improvement. Let it be our effort that this onward march be continued. History does not repeat itself; the Puritan of 1640, and the Patriot of 1776, will never return. But it is possible for us to live nobly and manfully as well as they. While we honor their virtues and cherish the noble institutions of freedom, of education and religion, which they left us, let us seek to combine with their simplicity, sincerity, and intensity of purpose, a finer taste, a higher culture, an increase of knowledge, and a more intelligent faith. It remains for us to finish the glorious temple of which they formed the noble plan and laid the firm foundation.













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